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ABSTRACT

These 23 presentations are organized in five categories: diversity, assessment, distance education, learning, and teaching. Five papers on diversity include the following: "From Rosie the Riveter to Comparable Worth: The Infusion of Gender and Women's Issues into an Interdisciplinary Curriculum for Working Adults" (Linda L. Hulbert, Theodore A. Kotila); "A Bosnian Muslim, a Thai and a South Vietnamese Buddhist Meet the Christian College" (Pauline M. Coffman); "Civic Action and Public Education: The Australian Experience" (Alastair Crombie, Roger Morris); "Studying and Teaching Cultural Diversity in a Police Department, a Chemical Plant, and an Adult Degree Program" (Elliott Lauderdale et al.); and "Exploring Faculty Perceptions of the Importance of Multicultural Adult Education: Who Cares?" (Ian Baptiste et al.). Five presentations deal with assessment: "Innovations in the Assessment of Experiential Learning" (Richard Ashbrook et al); "Transformative Learning and Prior Learning Assessment" (LeAnn K. McGinley); "Outcomes Study for SUNY [State University of New York]/Empire State College's Independent Business Education Program" (Carolyn C. Shadle); "Choices and Consequences in the Assessment of Adult Learning Outcomes" (Richard Ashbrook et al.); and "Prior Experiential Learning Assessment: Loosening the Grip of the Course-Equivalency Model" (Thomas G. Travis). The five presentations on distance education are as follows: "Distance Learning and the Reconceptualization of Education for Adults" (Donald J. MacIntyre); "Interactive Television: An Adventure in Graduate Education" (Norman L. Sommers); "Individualized Mentoring and Distance Learning: An Experiment that Works" (Anne Cobb, Thomas Rocco); "Integrating Student Services into Distance Learning" (Ann Hall, Peggy Falkenstein); and "Organization and Pedagogy in the Online Seminar" (Roger C. Cranse). Three papers focus on learning: "Connecting Learning and Activism: An Experiment in Adult Higher Education" (Gloria Still, Elene Kent); "Leadership

with the Self, through the World, into the Future: Excellence in Education for Adult Learners" (Caroline L. Bassett); and "Making Excellence Possible: Contextualized Learning and Praxis" (Mary E. Boyce, John W. Willets). The five presentations on teaching are as follows: "A Competency Model for Instructors in Adult Higher Education: A Work in Progress" (Stephen M. Brown, John Foran); "The Teaching Portfolio: An Individual Creation" (Beverly K. Firestone); "Using Storytelling to Identify Practice-Based Competencies of Advising" (M. B. Fiddler); "Teaching in the Learner-Centered Environment: A Job Description" (Carla R. Payne, John R. Goss, III); and "Mentoring Adults: Universal Education for the Twenty-First Century?" (Xenia Coulter, Irene Rivera de Royston). (YLB)

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15th Annual

ALLIANCE/ACE Conference

An Association for Alternative Degree Programs for Adults

er 5, 6, 7, 1995 Hyatt on Capitol Square Columbus, Ohio

ED 402 510

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: LEARNING AND TEACHING IN ADULT HIGHER EDUCATION

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CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: LEARNING AND TEACHING IN ADULT HIGHER EDUCATION

FIFTEENTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE AND EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

October 5-7, 1995

Columbus, Ohio

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DIVERSITY

From Rosie the Riveter to Comparable Worth: The Infusion of Gender and Women's Issues into and Interdisciplinary Curriculum for Working Adults

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Wayne State University

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For more than twenty years, the Interdisciplinary Studies Program (ISP) at Wayne State University has been providing a baccalaureate program for working adult students. The program has been able to offer students a degree within a reasonable period of time through an innovative and integrated curriculum delivery format. The ISP has attached once-a-week undergraduate seminars to telecourses or directed studies and combined them with conference courses, allowing students to carry a full academic load every semester. This last format, the conference course, has proven especially successful in introducing gender issues into the curriculum.

A conference course usually meets for three full weekends each semester on the main campus, drawing from fifty to two hundred students from as far as fifty miles away. Normally, the first weekend session is scheduled three to four weeks after the start of a term, allowing students time to read introductory materials. The second session follows in about three to four weeks; shorter/interim written assignments may be due then. The final weekend occurs about three to four weeks before the term ends; the major written assignment usually is due two weeks after this final session.

During each eight-hour session on Saturday and Sunday, students are exposed to lectures—representing a number of disciplines, panel discussions, films, live performances and small group workshops, all directed toward a specific topic. Additionally, a reader is developed for each conference course. Material for that reader is drawn from as many disciplinary perspectives as possible.

Because of the limitations of available faculty and resources, as well as Wayne State University's General Education Requirements, the ISP basic curriculum is rather highly structured. The conference course format, however, allows faculty the flexibility to deal with any number of issues of current interest. Topics covered in these courses have varied from understanding facets of the arts or Chinese culture to the Cold War to a critical analysis of the media; two of the more popular courses have been "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" and "Gender:

Construct and Conduct." In short, the conference course format has provided learning opportunities, both for the students and the instructors, that, otherwise, would not have been available in a conventional classroom setting.

In the past, some conference courses have been designed for specific sub-groups of students, e.g., a visual and performing arts conference for students enrolled in the program's Humanities classes. Other conferences have been developed across the disciplines, such as our treatment of South Africa or a conference designed around the 1992 elections. Faculty often will design these conferences for both lower and upper division undergraduates. In these cases, the students participate in the same experience, but are given different assignments, depending upon their class standing.

Conference course topics and coordinators are chosen at least one academic year prior to the projected term of offering. We try not to schedule the same topic for at least two, preferably three, academic years. The process begins when the program's Curriculum Committee solicits proposals from the full-time faculty. Usually, a single faculty member proposes a conference topic, which may be an issue of current interest to the individual or may be perceived as something of current significance to ISP students. In the event that several faculty wish to team teach a conference topic, the proposal is also considered by the faculty Workload Committee. In most instances, however, a single individual is asked to coordinate a conference, and that activity will constitute one-third to one-half of the individual's workload for the semester. Although this one individual becomes the "coordinator" and the instructor of record, two or three other faculty attend the conference and, more often than not, actively participate in the course, delivering one or two lectures. Virtually all of the students enrolled in a conference course also are enrolled in another course offered by one of the faculty participating in the conference. These faculty, thus, are available to students during the weeks between the plenary sessions of the conference course.

Prior to determining course content, it is customary for the conference coordinator to consult with other members of the ISP faculty, as well as friends and acquaintances elsewhere within the university. The twenty-two full-time members of the ISP faculty represent a dozen different disciplines and at least twenty specific areas of academic interest. Since most of them have taught conferences at one time or another, their experience is useful to draw upon, even though it might not be topically specific. It is the conference course coordinator's responsibility to design a consciously interdisciplinary approach to a particular topic.

using guest speakers, films and other available teaching tools. The prior experience and contacts of one's colleagues often are helpful in that design. This is especially true for those colleagues who attended the conference with their students the last time it was offered or who will be attending the subsequent offering.

When "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" was first offered in 1985, it was jointly developed by five members of the faculty with the help of a small grant from Wayne State University. The addition of this course to the curriculum was timely; the enrollment of women in the ISP had grown from about 10% to 40% over the previous decade. However, gender issues and women's studies were not proportionally represented in the ISP curriculum in the mid 1980's.

When the course was initially offered, one-third of the content was focused on general issues of gender identification, in a cross-cultural framework; the next third was devoted to the struggles, victories and set-backs of working women in the U.S. during the 1930's and 1940's. The final portion of the course concentrated on contemporary issues, again in global perspective.

The faculty evaluation of this first offering suggested that perhaps the plans were somewhat ambitious. Subsequently, these ideas have evolved into three courses. "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" has been narrowed in its focus to the United States, but it still retains a cross-cultural perspective within that context. The more generalized gender issue portion of the initial course has become the other conference course being discussed in this paper. Finally, an undergraduate seminar, "Women in Development," has emerged as a regular offering in the past five years; this seminar addresses the global issues/perspectives portion of the initial course. The designers of the first conference on working women eventually achieved their goal; women's studies have been incorporated into the curriculum. This is especially important now that 60% of the program's student population is female.

Students enrolled in these conference courses are consciously exposed to an interdisciplinary exploration of the topic. Interdisciplinary approaches a problem with an attempt to integrate separate perspectives and experts around a synthesis of the contributing parts. The result, or at least the goal, is a picture that integrates separate pieces of knowledge and information, achieves a common understanding or agreement, devises a solution that combines separate voices and inputs, or constructs an answer that is richer or greater than any one approach alone (Klein, 1990).

"Gender:Construct and Conduct" focuses on the idea that an understanding of gender has as much to do with cultural and

social conditioning as with biological development. The conference featured, among its speakers, faculty trained in physiological psychology, anthropology, sociology, communications, business administration, and at least three areas of history. Students enrolled in "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" were addressed by a folklore expert, three historians, a political scientist, an economist, a sociologist, a psychologist and a social worker. In both cases, most of the students were required to submit a major paper attempting an interdisciplinary synthesis of the course material. Lower division students enrolled in the conference on working women were asked to write a compare and contrast paper in lieu of the more complex interdisciplinary synthesis.

Conference course coordinators are quite aware that this format lends itself strongly toward an instructor-directed learning environment. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) and many others have pointed out that this is not always the best situation for maximizing adult learning. Nevertheless, surveys of the students enrolled in "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" suggested that, although more than 90% of the students were employed full-time, the students' perceptions of working women in the United States tended to be based on personal experience alone. In this sort of situation, the students benefit from direction and support in understanding both content and evaluative methodology. Yet, many years of experience have taught the ISP faculty that the intensity of this learning experience easily can work against itself. This can be mitigated to a great extent by varying the types of informational sources and by the role the conference coordinator plays.

In both conference courses, the formal lectures were interspersed with films, student and/or faculty panel discussions and small group workshops. "Understanding the Roles of Working Women" included the performance of a one-act play by a small group of local professional actors. The coordinator of "Gender: Construct and Conduct" included several concurrent special interest workshops during one day of the course.

The coordinators of these conference courses cannot be expected to be conversant in all the disciplines they bring to bear on a particular topic. This actually acts in their favor, allowing them to further influence the learning environment of the conference course. Schuttenberg and Tracy (1987) observe that an adult educator may assume leadership, collaborative or collegial roles in an educational situation. The ISP conference course coordinator plays all three. The person obviously establishes the course objectives as well as the means by which they are achieved. The coordinator leads by planning and

teaching. As collaborator, or facilitator, the coordinator can coach the students. This is especially valuable when new methodologies must be imparted to the students. Finally, the coordinator can act as a colleague by learning from the material being presented by course participants along with the students. By moving among all three roles, the ISP conference course coordinator can help to foster a collaborative learning environment.

Over the past twenty-one years, the ISP faculty has seen the conference course format as an opportunity to actively engage relatively large numbers of students in one course, at least, that can be constantly modified for relevance to both faculty and students. Moreover, the conference course coordinator can vary the learning environment to encourage the active involvement of students and to create a genuine community of learners.

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A Bosnian Muslim, a Thai and a South Vietnamese Buddhist Meet the Christian College

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The north side of Chicago is an entry point for immigrants from many countries. The diversity is staggering. Thais, South Vietnamese, Koreans, Laotians, South Indians, Middle Eastern Arabs, Latino/as, Puerto Ricans, and more...are joining concentrations of Swedes, Eastern European Jews, and Eastern European Poles. In 1991, North Park College launched its degree-completion program for adults and advertised it locally. The community responded! Cohort groups of 12-15 students typically include African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and European Americans, most of whom have a Christian background, but also include Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, Thai and South Vietnamese Americans.

One of the latter I'll call Linda. She left South Vietnam with her family while a young teenager. They fled in a boatload of refugees and spent the next eleven days on the ocean. On the second day they ran out of food; on the ninth day they were attacked by robbers. I don't know how they survived. They eventually made their way to Chicago where she eventually completed a G.E.D. and found a job in a bank. She joined a cohort group at North Park, a Christian liberal arts college of the Evangelical Covenant denomination, to complete her B.A. degree.

One day I answered my phone to hear sobbing and a desperate request that I drop her from the next course. I knew that she was under a lot of stress; not only was she a student, she was getting married in a few weeks and having trouble at work. I asked her to come in and talk. "I have to get away. My husband's parents are demanding too much. (She had been married in a civil ceremony a year earlier). I'm going to pack my bag and get in the car and leave town. I was fired this morning. I can't take the pressure anymore." Gradually, the story poured out. In addition to obvious stresses, her husband's parents were insisting on a church wedding. Also from South Vietnam, they had converted to Roman Catholicism some years earlier, and now expected Linda to do the same. She was attending Catholic instruction. "The priest tells me I am going to hell if I don't become Catholic. I will do whatever he tells me to do, but why is he telling me I am bad? Why isn't my Buddhist faith honored here?" Now, let me say parenthetically, that I realize much of the Catholic Church has come a long way from the days of "damning non-

Catholics to hell" but the message can still be found in many Christian denominations, and she found it.

"Salim", a Bosnian Muslim, joined another cohort group this spring. He works for Bosnian Refugee Relief, an agency nearby, and spends his days helping Bosnians get to Chicago and negotiate various government and relief agencies. His father was a professor at a university in Sarajevo, teaching political science. Salim is quite matter-of-fact about his situation and that attitude carries over into this educational pursuits. Facing the requirement at North Park that he take a one credit topics course on Christian Perspectives as part of the organizational management major, he responded, "Whatever." He was self-assured enough to challenge a discussion on giving effective feedback to point out that some cultures were deeply offended to be given feedback in public, an indication to me that any discussion of Christianity that took priority over the Muslim faith would probably get the same blunt challenge.

"Tina", the Thai Buddhist, joined a cohort group two years ago and has now completed the major. North Park requires two religion courses, one of which is "Introduction to Biblical Studies". A text used is Harper's Bible Dictionary. She was confused by it and came to me for help. I gradually nderstood that she thought the Bible dictionary was the Bible. "If the Bible Dictionary is not the Bible, why was I asked to buy it?" Once in possession of the Bible (not included as a text for the course because "everyone already has one"...except, of course, Tina) she had to have help understanding the function of chapter and verse. This course continued to completely elude her. A peer in the class spent hours with her going over the questions and class discussions, but she was unable to write a coherent paper and flunked the course. The instructor is still expressing his deep feelings of remorse for not being able to "help" Tina.

Some of her difficulty is related to her struggle with English. But I suspect it is unreasonable to expect some persons from other cultures, especially religious cultures, to absorb a complete faith system from scratch and understand it enough to respond to college-level philosophical and religious questions.

These three students represent perspectives and challenges to the homogenous culture of a Christian college. Like most colleges, our faculty includes a wide spectrum of views of religion and society. And we are all Christians who profess an active faith; our Christian diversity comes from the variety of denominations we represent. A year ago, it was announced that we would be adding an African American and a Latino/a Study Center to the already established Korean American program and a Scandinavian Center. (North Park is over 100 years old and was

established by Swedish Covenanters who later became the Evangelical Covenant Church in the U.S.) The Scandinavian Center sponsors exchange programs with a corresponding center in Sweden. I was surprised to hear a respected member of the faculty declare, "We can't handle the diversity. This is a mistake. We will never be ready for it. It will damage the students." It was true that we were mostly blond and blue-eyed, but our Christian rhetoric embraced the outsider and emphasized service to the city, the poor. Over 50% of the traditional students participate in the Urban Outreach Program as an outgrowth of Christian commitment.

He recognized that with diversity would come diverse religious views, something we had not embraced. With other evangelical Christians, our ethos stresses a need to "bring others to Jesus Christ", to "share the gospel" with those who haven't heard it. But can we simply remain homogenous?

The United States is in the midst of another paradigm shift, a term used by Thomas Kuhn to refer to major transitions in scientific theories (Hodgson, 1994). A paradigm shift occurs when the evidence for a new way of thinking builds to the point where it cannot be ignored. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law a new immigration act initiated by John F. Kennedy that eliminated national origins quotas and opened the door for immigration from Asia. Over the next two decades the ethnic makeup of our country has changed dramatically. Diana L. Eck (1993) lists some of the religious realities: thirty to forty Vietnamese Buddhist temples in the Los Angeles area; six hundred Muslim mosques in the U.S.; five thousand Sikh Americans gather in Queens for large festival days; sixty Jain temples and centers in the U.S.; Bengali summer picnics and Hindu heritage family camps are available. Every major metropolitan area has large Hindu temples. There are more Muslims in the U.S. than Episcopalians. Likewise, the "Old World" is taking on religious pluralism. Leicester, England is the second-largest Hindu city in the world outside India (Durban, South Africa, is the first). The experience of North Park College on the northwest side of the city of Chicago is hardly unique. During this same period, of course, the analysis of power relationships by the civil rights movement and women have challenged basic understandings of society (see Coffman, 1989). This is part of the paradigm shift.

Then last summer I had occasion to view a lecture on videotape by Krister Stendahl (1994), Bishop Emeritus of the Church of Sweden and Former Dean of Harvard Divinity School, entitled "The Lure of Oneness and the Grace of Pluralism". His words gave me some clues as to how to proceed. He opens with the Jewish prayer: "Do not let me use my reason against your truth."

And then he asks, "In the eyes of God, could it be that we are all minorities?" He speaks of the hunger for oneness, attractive to those in power, as the legacy of the Hellenistic world (from Platonism); the legacy includes the Pax Romana, the crusades, and the inquisition. Scripture does not say: "Let your light so shine that all will become Christians." No—"...that we glorify God in heaven." "How do we sing our song to Jesus," he asks, "without finding fault in the other?"

Several scriptural texts are often cited as justification for regarding Christian views above all others. Acts 4:12, in which Peter refers to Jesus, says "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved." Dr. Stendahl reminds us that Peter was being accused of magic (preaching the resurrection of the dead), and he responded by confessing Jesus; "he was not thinking of Buddhism" says Stendahl. In John 14 ("I am the way, and the truth, and life. No one comes to the Father except through me") Jesus is in the midst of an intimate moment with his disciples consoling them after predicting that Peter would deny him three times. He was not, says Stendahl, evaluating Hinduism.

Stendahl is looking at the context for Paul's words rather than making them apply universally to all peoples and contexts. Robert Bellah (1995), professor of sociology at the University of California at Berkeley, makes the same point in a recent Christian Century article:

> Being new to Canada and rather homesick, we invited in two Mormon missionaries from Utah when they called on us in Montreal and spoke with their familiar Western twang. After exchanging small talk, which is what we really wanted, the missionaries were eager to get down to the business of converting us. They pulled out an elaborate display of illustrated cardboard's, depicting incidents from the Bible. The story developed sequentially along the lines of 'if you believe this then you must believe this'. I was willing to consent up to a certain point and then I had to discourage the discourse from continuing. I already knew a great deal about Mormonism and was not about to be converted. Aside from disappointing our new friends, the thing that most impressed me on that occasion was that their entire pitch was based on the assumption a) that we were familiar enough with the Bible to follow their argument and b)that if they could demonstrate that the Bible said something they wanted to prove, we would be constrained to agree. Ignorance of the Bible or lack of confidence in its authority would have left them completely at sea. (p. 423)

The first Christians in the Bible were in the same position as the Mormon missionaries, says Bellah. Paul spoke almost al-

ways to Hebrews who knew the stories of the Old Testament. When he spoke to biblically illiterate Athenians, he had to summarize the story of the people of God, from the creation story in Genesis to the notion that God will "have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17: 24-33). Without this context, Paul's message might have been understood to be describing Jesus as a "guardian spirit" rather than connected to a community with a history. When Christianity is taught as an individual spirituality without connection to a specific history, the result is shallow and superficial. "In short," says Bellah, "understanding the meaning of Christ as Lord and Savior is deeply contextual, dependent on historical memory and cultural-linguistic literacy" (p. 424). Because this is so, Christians can legitimately claim "there is no salvation outside the church". This statement is saying it is necessary to experience the community of faith and to know the stories implicit in its history to find salvation. It is not speaking to the situation of non-Christians.

Both Stendahl and Bellah are taking seriously the matter of context. But how do we know the words are not intended as universal truth? There are clues. Stendahl lifts up the story of Abram, Sarah, Isaac, and Ishmael. Genesis 17 tells of the Lord appearing to Abram, establishing a covenant: you shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations." After a lengthy passage that describes the place (all of the land of Canaan) for God's people and a sign (circumcision) by which those within the covenant are recognized, Abraham (the name change another sign of being 'ancestor of a multitude') responds (to the news that he and Sarah, at the age of 90, will have a child—Isaac) with "O that Ishmael might live in your sight" (v. 18). Ishmael? Why bring him up at this momentous time? The response comes that Ishmael, son of Hagar, a slave woman, and Abraham, will be blessed and made "...fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation" (v. 20). In other words [says Stendahl], there is a place for "the other" in God's creation. God has plans for those outside the covenant community as well as those within.

In Corinthians, Paul addresses the fear of the Christian, that if I get too accepting of others, I slack off in my own faith. No, says Paul [and Stendahl interprets]; ours is not a "zero sum society" where the gain of one is the loss of another. Rather, let each community celebrate its own faith story. "Let a thousand flowers bloom!" God has provided a marvelous variety for us. In the famous love chapter, 13, Paul ruminates poetically about how "the other" becomes an asset instead of a liability. He translates

agape as "to esteem your neighbor". Condescension is the wrong attitude toward the other. We should frame our relationships rather as "holy envy".

Back to the "zero sum society" idea. Christians are to deepen their understanding of Jesus, says Stendahl; it is not necessary to make "no other way but Jesus for my salvation" a negative for others. "When I say I love my wife, it is not necessary for me to hate other women." Stendahl envisions a world in which Jew, Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist are all witnessing to one another in a spirit of pluralism, remembering that in God's eyes we are all minorities.

Bellah addresses the same passage even more clearly:

> A stronger way of putting it is that the idea that there is salvation in no other name but Jesus has the horizon of universality from the point of view of the context in which it is used. It is not the truth of Buddhists or Confucianists, but there is no truth, even scientific truth, that transcends the community that produces it. (p. 425)

When the context of the community becomes the focus for discovering meaning systems and truth claims that do not have to extend beyond it in order to be valid and important for the identity of its members, I believe something new and exciting is being claimed that can help us find ways to live together. This is the rest of the "paradigm shift" currently underway.

Anthropologists have been saying this loudly and clearly for at least two decades. Clifford Geertz, the noted cultural anthropologist, has defined "culture" as the "webs of significance that give meaning to our lives and experiences." Religion, he says, is the system (or at least one system) which holds the whole together. Religion is that which gives us a world view, a way of looking at things, supported by a conceptual framework and the basic sense that what we think and say on the basis of this framework is pervasive, truthful and real. It functions to establish powerful and long-lasting attitudes and motivations in human beings. Faith memories tie us to a community and bring comfort and support for life. The liturgy of worship renews us and points us to the service of those in need. At the same time, we have learned again in modern history that when one group attempts to impose its cultural views on another, terrible oppression can result (the holocaust, racism, ethnic cleansing are but three examples).

Stendahl translated agape as "to esteem your neighbor" or "holy envy". Imagine approaching "the other", whether it is a life partner, someone with a different faith conviction, or even someone with the same faith conviction but a different denomination, eager to learn everything you can about them. And to be regarded in return with the same eagerness. "Tell me what mat-

ters to you in your faith." And we can respond, knowing that it is not necessary to prove our version is better, knowing that each cultural-linguistic community has a meaning system unique to itself and effective in its own culture and set of experiences.

Diana L. Eck, in her brilliant new book Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey From Bozeman to Banaras (1993) calls for a dialogical community in which persons of faith eagerly study and inquire into the faiths of others, comparing insights with their own, offering critiques in love where they seem warranted. She recalls M. Ghandi's letter to the British viceroy in which he begs him to repeal the tax on salt, a tax which would fall most heavily on the poor.

> Take your own salary. It is over 21,000 rupees [about $7,000] per month...against India's average income of less than two annas [four cents] per day. Thus you are getting over five thousand times India's average income. On bended knee, I ask you to ponder over this phenomenon. I have taken a personal illustration to drive home a painful truth. I have too great a regard for you as a man to wish to hurt your feelings. I know that you do not need the salary you get. Probably the whole of your salary goes for charity. But a system that provides for such an arrangement deserves to be summarily scrapped....My ambition is no less than to convert the British people through nonviolence, and make them see the wrong they have done India. I do not seek to your people. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own....[signed] Your sincere friend, M.K. Gandhi. (209-10)

Eck notes that Ghandi refuses to demonize his opponent and insists on addressing him with respect and in friendship. She also provides a review of Ghandi's openness to insights of faith from Christian, Buddhist, and other traditions that enrich his own Hindu culture. In his "household", even the enemy must be included to have meaningful mutuality in dialogue and friendship.

Does this make the Christian faith less meaningful? I find that it becomes more meaningful. I can now look back upon important times in various settings of my life, most of them in church communities, when events and words of Scripture, were life-transforming. I am eager to see where they will take me next. Far from abandoning faith, Christians are called anew to study and know Jesus and His claim upon their lives, especially now that institutions are less homogenous. It also means that we regard others through a frame of agape, holy envy, with esteem. How is it that other faith communities describe and experience transcendance? What is the significance of the liturgical patterns of worship and renewal? If we are able to see, we will find the

landscape of God's creation covered with thousands of flowers.

How can the Christian college respond? Our stated mission includes these words:

North Park is ... a Christian college, with a faculty committed to relating the values and understandings of Christian faith to the academic fields they represent. For us, intellectual understanding is fragmentary unless ultimately joined to an understanding of the spiritual nature of all persons....The spirit of North Park's community is one of acceptance; students are admitted without regard to their religious persuasion and given the freedom to inquire and develop within a community of faith.

As I have discussed, we are discovering the depth of the challenge and are responding in several ways. An annual "community day" cancels classes so that faculty, staff and students are free to gather and listen to one another with the focus on issues of diversity. Classes are being added to the curriculum that broaden our study of other cultures.

Christian colleges have a right to pursue their mission. I have come to believe that the mission is better served when it includes genuine esteem for all persons and the perspectives they bring. And the global community will be better served as other private and public institutions of higher education enter into the arena of faith and its relationship to knowledge. We must find ways of living in the same household.

I realize that many are skeptical of this approach. Popular culture sees conflicting claims and either ignores all of them, or gravitates to the one version that validates views already held. Higher education, partly because of the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state and partly because it does not want to deal with conflicting truth claims of the religious community, largely has eliminated any discussion of faith from its purview. To avoid conflict, we don't talk about the real questions of ethics, politics and religion. It is ironic to me that higher education in the United States was established by churches who wanted to provide for educated clergy, yet it has become an institution that has separated itself from serious discussion of religious issues where expressions of deepest meaning are held (see Sloan, 1994).

We encourage our students to develop the ability to use critical, reflective judgment in every aspect of their lives. We do not encourage blanket acceptance of anything. Yet we are hesitant to get into religious matters using critical reflection. Some time ago, I ran across a clear explanation of two divergent hermeneutical (or interpretative) approaches used by the same denomination (Seventh-day Adventists, 1985) in applying biblical truths. It was stated like this:

> We might characterize one of the two hermeneutical approaches Adventists tend to use in applying the Biblical data to contemporary issues as the literalistic approach. Its proponents tend to focus upon Biblical statements or specific scriptural cases. In contrast, proponents of the second hermeneutic tend to look for the general principles they find inherent in the flow of Scripture. They also take into account the historical and cultural dynamics within which the inspired writer worked. (Eva, p. 14)

I noticed the statement because it was made in explanation of how persons in the same faith community could have different views on whether the church should ordain women. The literalistic view like logical positivism assumes there is an objective truth that can be applied in every situation. These two extreme positions of interpretation can be found in most denominations and religions, not just the Seventh-Day Adventists. The literalistic approach looks to the Bible as the only authority for doctrine and practice, a source for principles and practices God would have the church follow. The contextual approach, taking into account the historical and cultural dynamics within which the inspired writer worked, looks for the setting in which the Biblical story or verse is applied. Biblical themes are also considered, such as creation and redemption, law and grace, mutuality and forgiveness.

It is important to remind ourselves, I think, that the way we view Biblical texts and stories should be open to the same rigors of scholarship that we insist on for other disciplines. Historians and educators in all disciplines, especially religion, are concerned about passing on a body of knowledge and doing it accurately. Appleby et al (1994), in Telling the Truth About History, discuss the shift from absolutisms to the reliance on the scientific method to get at objective truth (thereby dismantling old absolutes), and on to the Enlightenment where "writers imagined a free and open social world where citizens, savants, and statesmen would reason together to encourage enterprise, expand the ambit of liberty, foster learning, and promote the interests of humankind" (p. 129). Historical criticisms such as post modernism and deconstructionism followed the Enlightenment and cast doubt on every written text that has been interpreted as an absolute for all peoples and cultures.

Appleby et al view the twenty-first century as a time when historians can look for a new objectivity.

> No longer able to ignore the subjectivity of the author, scholars must construct standards of objectivity that recognize at the outset that all histories start with the curiosity of a particular individual and take shape under the guidance of her or his personal and cultural attributes. Since all knowledge origi-

> nates inside human minds and is conveyed through representations of reality, all knowledge is subject-centered and artificial, the very qualities brought into disrespect by an earlier exaltation of that which was objective and natural. Our version of objectivity concedes the impossibility of any research being neutral (that goes for scientists as well) and accepts the fact that knowledge-seeking involves a lively, contentious struggle among diverse groups of truth-seekers. Neither admission undermines the viability of stable bodies of knowledge that can be communicated, built upon, and subjected to testing. These admissions do require a new understanding of objectivity. (p. 254)

I was startled last spring to hear a student say that her church kept the Latin mass and prayer book until the late 1970's. She was speaking of the Roman Catholic Church in Chile. "We were not supposed to read the Bible," she said. A classmate, raised in the Roman Catholic Church in Chicago, responded that her church dropped the Latin mass in the early 1970's. Now, a generation later, there is a hunger for spirituality on our campuses. Simply abandoning faith communities has not satisfied that hunger.

The words of Viktor Frankl, survivor of the death-camps of World War II, are instructive: "The more w akly one stands on the ground of his belief....the more he clings with both hands to the dogma which separates it from other beliefs; on the other hand, the more firmly one stands on the ground of his faith, the more he has both hands free to reach out to those of his fellow men who cannot share his belief" (Gould, 1995). Almost anachronistic because of the exclusively male-reference language which he would not use today, Frankl's intent is clear. Our faith gives us the grounding and the freedom to be in dialogue, in relation, with all of God's creatures, if we stand on firm ground. We can learn from each other as we, in a relationship of holy envy, carry on the dialogue of real faith-sharing. Our global survival depends on it.

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Civic Action and Public Education: The Australian Experience

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Public Education

'Public education' refers to educative activities designed to promote awareness, understanding, or skills of citizens in relation to important issues on the public policy agenda. Some such issues in Australia today include Aboriginal reconciliation, blue-green algae, the constitution and our future governance, violence against women, superannuation and other aspects of financing retirement, health promotion, road safety and euthanasia. It is now becoming clearer and more widely appreciated that programs of public education are a very common response of government. There are grounds for believing that such activity is expanding. It is important that adult educators deepen their understanding of the increasing role and scope of public education. It is also important that those who commission and manage such programs appreciate the role and scope of adult education.

The Scope of Governmental Public Education

Earlier this year, the Centre for Continuing Education at the Australian National University commissioned a survey, under the direction of Professor Richard Johnson, of public and community education activities being funded through Commonwealth Government departments and agencies in 1994. The survey collates information from twelve departments, those which could reasonably be expected to be responsible for the bulk of governmental public education expenditures. A more detailed look at those portfolio areas not included would undoubtedly identify some additional elements of public education. This is to say that the data assembled here will understate the total picture.

The data that we can comment on reveal an impressive scope and diversity. In some cases one needs to distinguish carefully between public education activity and public relations activity; Governments also spend a good deal on promoting and marketing their chosen policies and programs. Bearing this in mind these, it seems probable that Commonwealth expenditure on public education each year is in the range of $100 to $200 million. Within this total there are some large clusters, and a large number of rather small programs. Some of the largest clusters are found in

relation to familiar issues and target groups.

The Minister for Human Services and Health has recently announced that there will be a public education program in relation to people with mental illness which will aim to reduce community ignorance and anxiety about such people. The Office of Multicultural Affairs is responsible for a number of programs aimed at increasing community awareness and understanding of our cultural diversity. The Aboriginal Reconciliation Branch of the Prime Ministers department funds programs aimed at increasing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal Australians. There are substantial programs directed at issues which particularly affect women, and wider issues of gender awareness and relations. Several of these are administered through the Office for the Status of Women. Others are administered through the Health portfolio. Not surprising, rural Australia is another focus for public education activity, a good deal of it under the rubric of the Rural Adjustment and Services program. Some of these programs clearly relate to the contemporary pressures on agriculture and rural communities.

In some ways the two largest classic areas of public education activity are health and the environment. Apart from the very significant resources allocated to addressing community awareness and understanding of particular diseases or health conditions - AIDS, breast cancer, drug abuse, and so on, there has been a gradual shift in favour of preventive health measures. A prime motive for government in this area is containment, and hopefully reduction, of future costs of health care as a result of a better informed public, more willing to take responsibility for managing and seeking to improve their own health and fitness. Public education on environmental issues also has both remedial and preventive aspects. As with health, there is a growing realization that without widespread public awareness, involvement, and finally changed behavior, little progress can be made. The Landcare program, funded through Primary Industry and Energy, is an Australian success story in public education, and has spawned a small family of parallel programs, such as Dunecare. The Commonwealth Environmental Protection Agency has undertaken explicitly public education activities in relation to cleaner industrial production, water quality, and lead in petrol.

There is a further clustering of public education activities in the area of social justice, where the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is a lead agency. It has responsibilities in the areas of race, sex, and disability discrimination, and privacy. Public education is also a prominent part of the work of the Australian Electoral Commission. The Attorney General's portfolio, which includes a number of independent statutory

agencies, carries out public education in a range of areas. It includes the work of the Insolvency and Trustees Service, the Bureau of Consumer Affairs, the Law Reform Commission, and the Family Law Council. The Office of Legal Aid and Family Services fund programs of marriage counselling, marriage education, family education, adolescent mediation, and family skills training to a total of some $20 million annually.

As can be seen from the above, federal government agencies are heavily involved in, what they describe as, public education. Whether all such activity could be classified as adult education remains unclear. Indeed there are a number of questions concerning public education that need to be addressed.

Questions and Issues

What does the volume and range of government expenditure on public education say about modern government? Although we do not have the data to confirm it, there is a widely shared perception that government's role in public education is expanding. Is this a corollary of the drive for 'smaller government' - a recognition that as governments withdraw back to basics, they leave behind a new need for public knowledge and understanding? The recent commitment by the Minister for Human Services and Health to an $8 million 'community awareness campaign' in relation to mental illness could be an example, a flow-on from de-institutionalisation.

There is a second, more cynical interpretation of the public education phenomenon. It is argued from time to time that such campaigns are a knee-jerk political response to policy hot spots: a way of being perceived as doing something, buying time while media interest and political sensitivity abates. During 1993 for example, violence against women - arguably a deep seated, culturally ingrained dimension of Australian society became an issue in the wider community and one of the responses of government was to fund community awareness and education processes.

This issue of motive (short term political buffering or damage control, versus long term commitment to change through education) is likely to be reflected in the strategies chosen, and in the kinds of agencies that are contracted to carry out the work. Short term opinion management is best put in the hands of advertising and marketing experts, advised by the appropriate political experts. Strategies will most likely centre on use of the mass media, particularly television. Strategic commitment to social or behavioural change through education on the other hand will tend to draw on educational and community development concepts and theories which address the challenge of moving from awareness, to information and action.

A further closely related issue concerns the distinction between public relations work and education - between the communication and selling of government decisions, policies, strategies, and the cultivation of an informed but critical citizenry, better equipped to make decisions about the complex issues that confront them. Sceptics would argue that government initiated public education is almost bound to be in some measure self-serving, to promote the government's perception of an issue, and its preferences for responding to it.

An important practical issue is the feasibility, and the desirability of seeking to enhance the government's awareness or coordination of its total public education effort. Given for example, the preoccupation in the priority domain of skills formation with benchmarking and international best practice, one could make a case for similar attention to quality and quality improvement in the area of public education. One might then begin a search for world best practice standards in Scandinavia, where democracy has long been self-consciously underpinned by a strong commitment to adult education on public affairs. Olaf Palme once famously remarked to the effect that Sweden is largely a study circle democracy.

Finally, there is an issue of particular interest to adult educators, adult and community education (ACE) is increasingly recognised and supported by governments as the 'fourth sector' of education. There are some 2000 providers of ACE in Australia, specializing in the initiation, design, delivery and evaluation of learning opportunities for adults. Many of them are already substantially involved in public education activity, on their own initiative. Collectively this ACE sector has a capacity to partner with government in active public education programs.

Study Circles and Civic Education

Study circles are small, self-managing adult education discussion groups. Each establishes its own learning goals and uses the study materials provided according to its own objectives. A study circle enables small autonomous groups (say 5-15 people) to read, discuss and debate issues at their own pace, in their own way, according to local needs. The groups are self directing with a discussion leader or facilitator chosen from amongst themselves, whose role is to guide the group's progress through the material. The facilitator does not need to be a trained educator or to even have any special knowledge of the material under discussion as long as the material provided contains clear guidelines.

The study circle concept was pioneered as a broad adult education approach in Sweden almost one hundred years ago. Australia also has a long history of involvement with similar adult

education processes beginning with the mutual self-improvement societies of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the dispersed and sparse nature of the Australian population led to an early development of distance education techniques. Adult education's particular response was the development of various Box, Kit or Discussion Group Schemes. These schemes all involved groups meeting to discuss a selected topic over six to eight sessions supported by printed notes, appropriate books, discussion guides, questions and supported, in some cases, by correspondence with a tutor.

It was from this tradition that the Australian Association of Adult and Community Education (AAACE) drew when it decided to offer the expertise of the broad adult education field to government to assist in its public education initiatives. The AAACE is the nation's peak organization in the field of adult and community education in Australia. The AAACE principal objective is:

> to promote the development of an open, informed, tolerant, democratic and creative society in which decisions at all levels are increasingly guided by access to relevant information knowledge and understanding... (AAACE Brochure, 1993)

Aboriginal Reconciliation Study Circles

This project is a joint initiative of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and the AAACE. It aims to involve large numbers of adult Australians in structured self-managed discussions on issues related to Aboriginal Reconciliation. This account of the project draws heavily on the final report of the project development team (Boughton & Durnam, 1993).

In August 1991, the Australian Federal Parliament unanimously passed an Act setting up the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. The responsible Minister has described the Council's functions as to:

> promote a deeper understanding ... of the history, culture, past dispossession and continuing disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and of the need to redress that disadvantage.
>
> foster a commitment from governments at all levels to address progressively Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and aspirations
>
> consult with Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people and the wider community on whether reconciliation would be advanced by a formal document, and to make recommendations on the nature and content of any such document. (Tickner 1992)

Currently, the Council comprises 25 members, including 12 Aboriginal people and 2 Torres Strait Islanders. The non-

indigenous members include representatives of the main political parties in the Australian Parliament, of key sectors of the business community, including the mining and pastoral industries, of the trade union movement, the ethic community, the churches and the entertainment and the arts sector.

Each study circle kit contains an introduction, explaining how to use the kit, notes for facilitators and participants, and session guides for each of the eight sessions. Each session guide contains suggested discussion questions and activities. The eight session topics are: Introduction to Aboriginal reconciliation; Learning from history; Culture, land and sea; Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia; Myths, stereotypes and prejudice; Government policy and practice; International law and overseas experiences; and Local activity to achieve justice. Additional resources including a video, booklets and further reading lists are also included.

To date, more than 2000 Aboriginal Reconciliation Study Circles have been established. About 40% of these Study Circles were sponsored by adult education organizations, another 25% by church groups, with community organizations, youth organizations, women's groups and trade unions (about 5% each) also playing significant roles. In October 1993, the 33rd Annual Conference of the AAACE was held in Alice Springs. The theme was "learning from the centre". For four days, white and black adult educators from all parts of Australia gathered to learn from each other and to advance the process of reconciliation. A strong resolution in support of Aboriginal land rights was adopted and conveyed to the Australian Prime Minister. Australian adult education, in the year of the world's indigenous people, had begun to come to grips with the very real difficulties faced by Aboriginal Australians.

Blue Green Algae Study Circle

While the Aboriginal Reconciliation Study Circles are in operation across Australia, the Blue Green Algae Study Circles are just about to go into the trialling phase. The Murray-Darling is Australia's major river system - a system badly affected by blue green algae. The work of the Murray Darling Commission exemplifies the priority of public education where solutions have to be found to serious long term environmental degradation problems.

The Commission entered into a partnership with the AAACE to develop and operate a three year study circle program aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of water quality issues and the actions that individuals and communities can take to prevent such environmental problems. That study circle kit is now ready to be tested. The test kit includes posters, brochures,

a video tape, an audio tape and a suggested framework for six discussion sessions. It focuses on the problems that blue green algae cause in the Murray-Darling Basins and what can be done. While the kit can easily be localized to suit study circles anywhere in Australia, the focus on the whole Murray Darling Basin highlights the need for co-ordinated action across state and territory boundaries.

The kit is a discussion framework, not a set course of study. Like any set of study circle materials each group can choose which elements of the kit emphasize and how to sequence and schedule their meetings. There is no shortage of people interested in field testing the kit. Right across Australia, adult educators, environmental activists, farmers, fishermen and other concerned persons have eagerly waited for the test version to be finalized so they could put it to use.

Civics, Citizenship and Democracy

As the Commonwealth of Australia approaches the centenary of its federation, Australians are able to look back on a remarkably successful record of democratic government. However, there is evidence that Australian democracy is in need of some restatement and that more could be done to promote informed and active citizenship. Towards that end, a Civics Expert Group was established by the Prime Minister in June 1994. In brief, the task of this group was to recommend a non-partisan program to enable all Australians to participate more fully and effectively in the civic life of Australia and thereby to promote good citizenship. In doing this work the Group consulted widely. Additionally a national civics survey was undertaken to assess the current level of relevant knowledge in the Australian Community. The Group presented its report to the Prime Minister in December 1994. This report described an urgent need for improved knowledge of civics and citizenship to counter a widespread ignorance on basic issues of our government and history. It recommended a range of measures spanning all formal education sectors and the broader community.

The Government supported the broad thrust of the Expert Group's recommendation, and has allocated $25 million in 1995-96 Budget. While much of this money will be spent in the more formal education sectors, one recommendation is especially pleasing to adult educators. The Commonwealth will contribute $500,000 towards the development of a program of study circles on civics and civil education for use by adult education providers across the broad Australian community. As Australians head toward the centenary of our Federation in 2001, Australian adults will have the opportunity to refresh and extend their knowledge of our history and what it means to be an Australian citizen today.

Conclusion

Adult education provides a nationwide distribution system managed by people with skills and experience in adult learning processes, who work closely with their local communities and are committed to the ideals and values of active citizenship. Governments at all three levels are increasingly recognizing and supporting such providers, especially in relation to their capacity to deliver certain types of vocational training for adults. They also have a significantly undeveloped potential for contributing to public education and civic action.

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Studying and Teaching Cultural Diversity in a Police Department, a Chemical Plant, and an Adult Degree Program

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Interactive Format: Will include presentation of research results, a replication of focus groups, sample diversity exercises, and a discussion of our group process. This paper will summarize the results of the authors' collaborative efforts to investigate cultural diversity in our respective contexts. Our studies of our organizations, concepts, and educational programs will be reported, analyzed and compared.

Unfortunately our discourse often fails to rise above a narrow range of what are colloquially called hot buttons or slogans. Slogans reflect demarcations of interest, allegiance, logic, or values which need not have any basis in social phenomena, law, or educational, governmental or industrial policy. A few words will serve to illustrate this idea of hot buttons: segregation, assimilation, discrimination, affirmative action, quotas, reverse discrimination, cultural diversity, valuing diversity, managing diversity, preferences, and eliminating affirmative action.

Heated differences about cultural diversity do sometimes correspond to group identities and specific demographic variables. This is the fire in classroom discussions of cultural diversity. Depending on the centrality of a dimension of diversity like age, race, or gender to one's identity, one may feel threatened or strengthened by generalizations about this particular group or cultural dimension. (Loden and Rosener, 1991). One who frequently discusses diversity in an educational situation gets accustomed to men leaning back arms akimbo or crossed.

One's reaction to heated debate may be cooled or clarified by a change in one's conceptual framework. There are several choices. An extended review of the educational and business literature on cultural diversity yielded an outline from which to view the costs

and benefits of addressing diversity issues. These ordered issues were the basis for focus groups in the original study and some common ground for the authors: recruitment and retention, reach beyond traditional groups, management styles and decision-making processes, relationships within organizations, and organization structure.

An outline of issues and concepts holds little sway against the weight of contradictory experience. Our differences lead to curious arguments about whether to call diversity a problem and whether to abstain from mentioning the hot button, cultural diversity at all. At another point it appeared that we were variously using diversity to refer to training programs, management strategies, to otherness, and a myriad of other concepts with which we do our work.

Below we will summarize this investigation cultural diversity in two contexts.: observing and surveying employees and trainers in an industrial work place and surveying polices chiefs in random Alabama communities. The approach of each co-author to diversity will precede his consideration of collected data and recommendations from findings. A brief comparison and recommendation for further work will follow.

Assessing Diversity for the High Performance Work Place: Territorial Conflict or Teamwork

As it applies to the work place, diversity recognizes differences in race, gender, physical ability, lifestyle, tenure, age, religion, geographic origin, education, ways of thinking, functional expertise, personality, etc. Diversity becomes an issue because the behavior of individuals toward each other can cause disruption. Sometimes the values or policies of the organization itself cause conflict or unfairness. In today's competitive world the issues of diversity should be emphasized and practiced in all facets of business. Diversity work enables people of different origins and backgrounds not only to work together successfully, but also to value and take advantage of their differences. Managing diversity maximizes the ability of all employees to contribute to organizational goals and to achieve their full potential unhindered by group identities such as gender, race, nationality, age, and departmental affiliation (Cox, 1994, p. 11).

In the chemical company where I work, the company culture is defined by the company values. These values form the foundation of how to respond to employees, customers, and the communities where we operate. These values promote respect for individuals and the contributions each can make to the organization. Diversity is one of the company values and is viewed as a strength.

It is necessary to survey employees in the work place at

different times to identify any issues that may need attention by the company. No organization should undertake diversity training without adequately diagnosing existing conditions. Questionnaires are a good way to solicit honest feedback from employees and guarantee complete anonymity. An effective questionnaire should identify present attitudes about workforce diversity and identify potential areas of conflict.

We conducted diversity training in 1993 that consisted of management skill development techniques and diversity awareness. This training was conducted without any assessment of the workforce for diversity issues. Whether you are going to design an original diversity training program, adapt an off-the-shelf product or bring in an outside expert, diagnosis can suggest what training should cover. It will also convey to the workforce that the organization wants to listen and address serious problems.

My company is currently involved in the process of developing a High Performance Organization. This process will move us to team-based management that is not constrained by any functional alignment. Teams will be created consisting of diverse groups of individuals.

I utilized a questionnaire to identify the major issues that need to be addressed by the company for the team concept to be effective. Because of the earlier training, I was able to assume some familiarity with diversity issues in the construction of the questionnaire. I surveyed both company employees and members of the Mobile Area Training and Education Symposium (MATES) to see if professionals in the surrounding area have the same issues and concerns about diversity.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. In sections I, II, and III participants were required to evaluate how critical each issue was to them individually on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being urgent. Section I consisted of statements that can affect worker satisfaction. In section II the respondents were asked to rate on issues that affect job mobility. Section III consisted of issues that influence the effectiveness of teams. Respondents were also asked if an incident had occurred in the last six months in their department related to cultural diversity and to describe the incident if possible. Participants were asked to evaluate the critical issues in section I and list the three issues seen most often at work. The second part of this question requested that the respondent describe the beliefs and values that could be the cause of the these behaviors that they listed. Section V consisted of demographic questions for analytical purposes.

Analysis of the data made apparent significant differences between females and minorities (MV) and males, especially white males. Men were less concerned with certain issues in each of

the sections of the survey. In section I, men identified as less important the following behaviors that affect worker satisfaction: insensitive language, we vs. they distinctions, departmental conflicts, and sexual harassment. Different views about the importance of departmental conflicts were most apparent. A t-test found the difference between female and minority views (MV) and those of males to be significant at the .012 level. This finding was reinforced by the critical issues participants wrote in section IV and the principles they identified as underlying these issues. The damaging effects of territorial conflicts are obvious to management. Working on easing this counterproductive competition is a priority of substantially less importance to men. This is extremely important to know as we work to develop teamwork. Our finding suggest that women have taken the initial step in solving a problem, recognizing its existence.

In section II, equality issues affecting job mobility, men were less concerned about inequities in pay, promotions, job definitions, and double standards. Lack of training opportunities and mentors were also of less concern to men. The main issue that is least important to males is the issue of inequities in job definition which was significant to the .002 level. There is a lot of opportunity for improvement by the company in the area of equality issues affecting job mobility.

When men responded to issues that affect teams in section III they were less concerned with the issues of how to use different strengths, what a multicultural organizations vision should be, being included in groups and resources to deal with diversity. MV concerns with being included in groups (mean 4.2) exceeded that of all participants (mean of 3.2). White males are less concerned about the organization having a stated vision of what a multicultural organization could be or could achieve (significance level of .059).

Male assessments of the importance of diversity issues were significantly below the mean, rather than MV being significantly above the mean. Assertions of a male dominated workforce are supported by our findings of males indifferent to the concerns of their less powerful co- workers. Curiously the largest differences of opinion occurred over issues which are less often identified as typically minority and female issues: job definition and interdepartmental conflict. Information from the survey results suggests a more productive team would be a diverse team; minorities and women will likely be better team members simply because they rated nearly every question about teams higher than males.

In sum, diversity training is likely to be key to the growth of organizations in the years ahead. Questionnaires are a good means of identifying issues in need of attention by organizations.

Policing A Culturally Diverse America:
An Assessment of Training Needs

The face of America is changing. As we move into the next century, rural police departments across America will have to address cultural differences within their communities. As more people of differing cultures move into rural communities, it will pose new problems for the police administrator. However, before this diversity can be dealt with, it must be understood.

Attempting to understand cultural diversity will take more than just the realization that people from different cultures eat different types of food and speak different languages. They also have different values, beliefs, and thought patterns. These varied values and beliefs give our communities their diversity. The understanding and communicating of these varied beliefs, by all citizens, are what transforms a community into a dynamic one.

Culture is very complex and can best be explained by comparing it to an iceberg. The tip represents the external part, the language, food, and customs. The largest part of the iceberg, which is below the surface, represents the internal aspects of that culture. This includes the beliefs, thought patterns, and views shared by all people in the same social group. This internal culture determines behavior. The understanding and appreciation of this internal culture will allow law enforcement officers to better understand what motivates that person's behavior. When two differing cultures come together, unless understanding exists between the two, the affects of this impact can pose problems for the community. As our society becomes more diverse, the ability to manage cultural diversity becomes essential.

Today's urban environment challenges many of the social structures and personal beliefs of citizens dwelling within our diverse communities. This environment will begin to filter down to rural America as we move into the next century. It is inevitable because of the shifting populations, immigration rates into the country, and the increasing birth rates in certain ethnic groups.

A diverse society makes the job of law enforcement difficult. Ethnicity seems to complicate every police procedure and encounter between the police and the public. However, the longer it takes to understand the influences of culture and ethnicity on behavior, the longer every police procedure and every encounter between the police and the multicultural public may remain complicated.

Some have suggested that these differences can only be addressed through training and education for the law enforcement officer. This education and training must start with understanding people, their culture, religion, race, and lifestyle, which is key to understanding human behavior.

To assess the effects of cultural diversity within the state of Alabama, a questionnaire was mailed out to a random sampling of one hundred police departments across the state in August of 1995. Thirty one departments responded to the following questions surrounding cultural diversity and current training needs. Listed below are questions asked and the percentage of all respondents answering yes or no.

1. Has cultural diversity in your community affected the operations of your department?
   Yes 29.1% No 66.6%
3. Is cultural diversity training a part of your in-service training program?
   Yes 12.5% No 87.5%
4. Is this type of training needed by your department?
   Yes 45.8% No 54.2%
5. Are human relations skills training a part of your in-service training program?
   Yes 70.8% No 29.2%
7. In the last six months, has an incident occurred in your community which is related to cultural diversity?
   Yes 25.0% No 75.0%
9. Do you actively recruit women and minorities to help address diversity issues?
   Yes 37.5% No 62.5%

It is clear from the data that even a state like Alabama which is mostly rural, is beginning to be affected by diverse cultures within their communities. A previous review of writing in the disciplines of industrial and labor relations and education failed to identify much use of geographic difference as a tool with which to understand diversity and change. (Ewert, King & Lauderdale, 1993.) . This study begins to explore this geographic dimension of diversity. Chart 4 compares the views urban police chiefs with their rural counterparts. The existence of experience with diversity in certain urban locales permits the anticipation of demographic trends in rural areas. While urban chiefs generally report substantially more experience with and concern for diversity issues, the chiefs of two smaller urban areas report communication problems and a need for Spanish speaking officers.

An understanding of cultural differences can be obtained through cultural awareness training. The ultimate goal of this training is to have law enforcement become more comfortable with diverse ethnicities, races, religions, and cultures different from themselves. As officers become comfortable, their ability to establish rapport with all citizens will increase. This improved interaction with citizens will lead to improved police-community relations.

Recommendations for further work

Whatever differences, backgrounds, charged language, cognitive style, or approach to leadership one brings to the production line or street, the growing diversification of communities and interdependence of economies is rarely contested. Writing on cultural diversity abounds, despite an arguably systematic bias against sustained research. Unfortunately the market for a wide variety of diversity consultants appears to discourage the sharing and rigorous evaluation of knowledge claims. Predictions about the withering away of institutional racism and sexism due to the demands of the global marketplace somehow fail to account for increasingly disparate circumstances and opportunities. The bulk of writing supporting cultural diversity research and programs appears to be directed toward the vanishing middle manager and above. Obvious anger and resistance to efforts to build inclusive organizations are rarely investigated. Cockburn's study is a notable exception.(1991). Taylor Cox and John Fernandez have worked consistently to document the benefits and costs associated with a diverse workforce to all workers.

Our practical research is a preliminary step to find concrete evidence to use as a reference as we learn and teach about cultural diversity. The tightly crossed arms ‹ ıe meets in discussions of diversity appear to hold in a rage which cries for some grounding in evidence and an opportunity not to excluded from contributing in a meaningful and rewarding way. Our findings allow us to bring some evidence to bear on arguments for ongoing diversity training and research.

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Chart 1

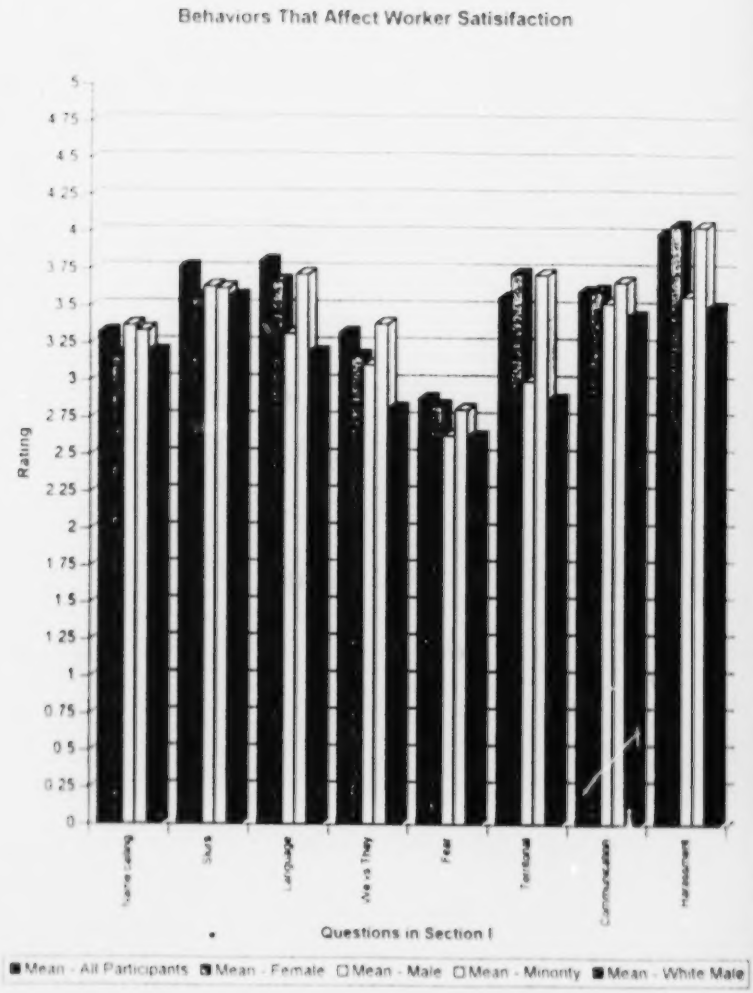
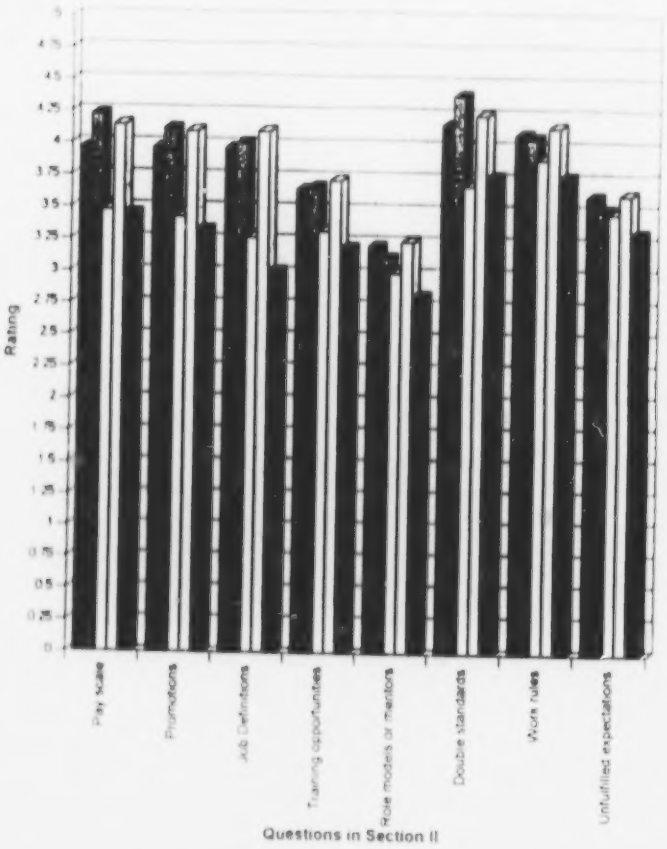

Behaviors That Affect Worker Satisfaction
Rating
5
4.75
4.5
4.25
4
3.75
3.5
3.25
3
2.75
2.5
2.25
2
1.75
1.5
1.25
1
0.75
0.5
0.25
0
Name calling
Shove
Language
Move They
Fear
Territorial
Communication
Harassment
Questions in Section I
Mean - All Participants
Mean - Female
Mean - Male
Mean - Minority
Mean - White Male

Chart 2

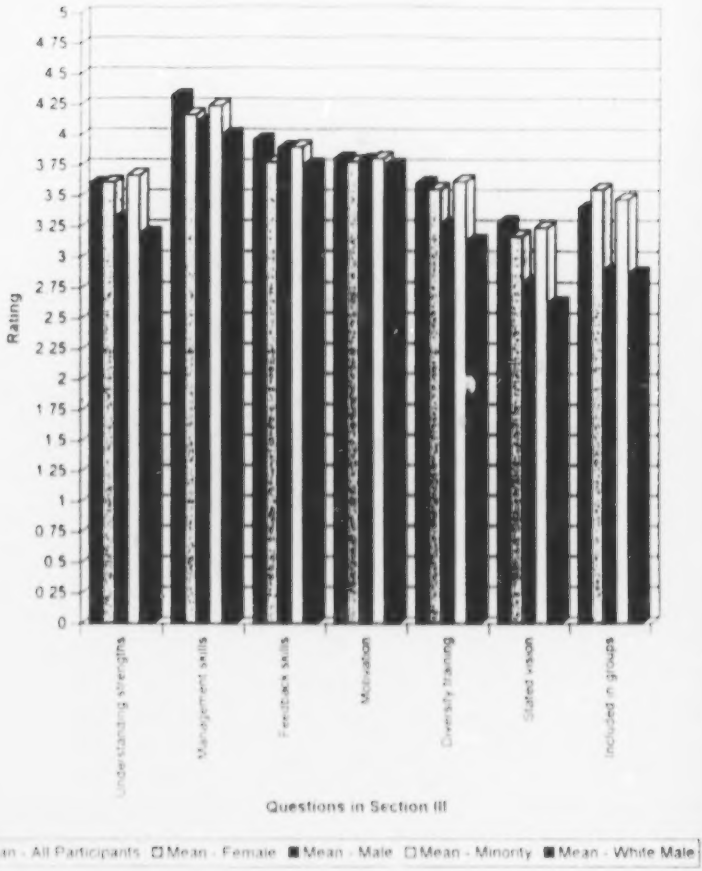
Equality Issues Affecting Job Mobility



40

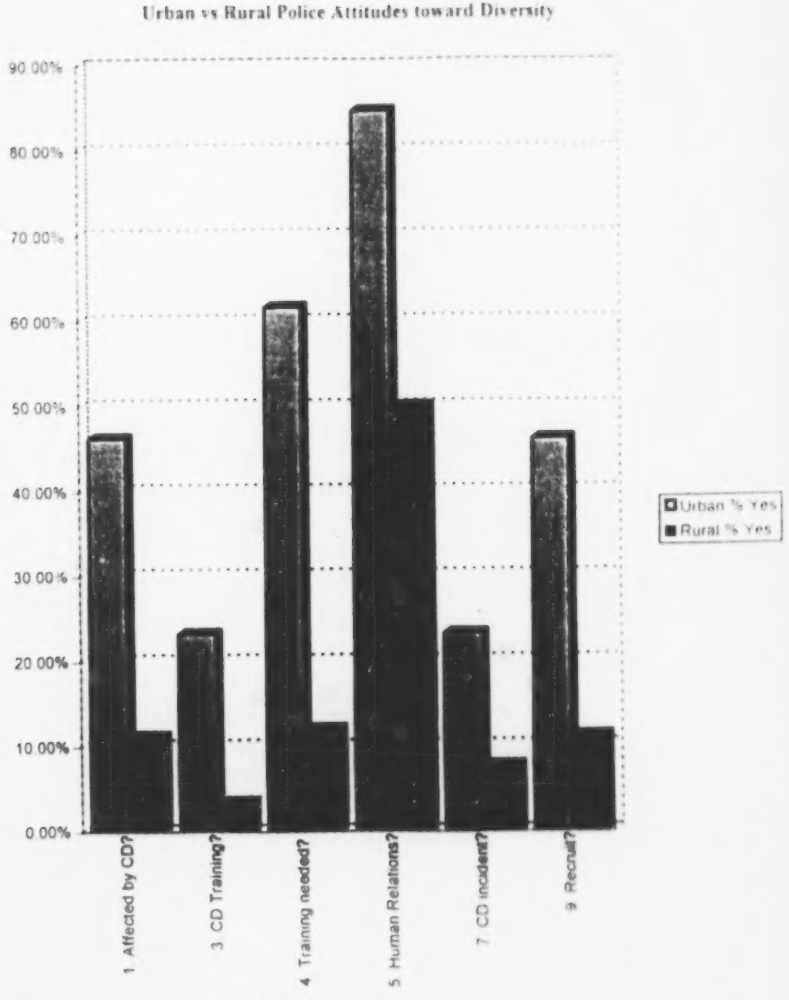
Chart 3

Issues That Affect Teams



41

Chart 4


Urban vs Rural Police Attitudes toward Diversity
90.00%
80.00%
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
1. Affected by CD?
3. CD Training?
4. Training needed?
5. Human Relations?
7. CD incident?
9. Recruit?
Urban % Yes
Rural % Yes

Exploring Faculty Perceptions of the Importance of Multicultural Adult Education: Who Cares?

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National-Louis University

Statement of the Problem

The caption in our memo to faculty requesting their participation in this study read:

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: WHO CARES? Clearly, not every one does, and among those who do, commitments vary widely. Some are decidedly hostile to multicultural education (MCE), viewing it as a threat to civilized society (Hirsch, 1988; D'Souza, 1992; Thomas, 1981). In addition, Ravish (1990) and Schlesinger (1992) warn of virulent and destructive tendencies occasioned by an uncensured MCE, and propose inoculating it (MCE) with an Anglo-American vaccine. Others, primarily within the Afrocentric camp, caution that MCE might be a shrewdly disguised return to assimilation and Eurocentric domination (Asante, 1980, 1991a, 1991b). There are also those who promote MCE for various reasons ranging from competitive economic advantage to social justice (Banks, 1983; Banks & Banks, 1993; Sleeter and Grant, 1987).

These battles over the value of MCE might be simply conceptual—opponents may be arguing over apples and oranges. But there may be other substantial reasons rooted perhaps in differing principles of social ethics. It is against this backdrop that we sought to explore faculty's perception of MCE.

Purpose of the Study

The authors are faculty in various undergraduate and graduate programs (Adult education, Human Services Counseling, and Applied Behavioral Sciences) at a medium-size private university with multiple campuses based primarily in the Midwestern United States, with some operations in Europe. The purpose of the study was to explore cross-disciplinary faculty perceptions of MCE: its meaning and value to them; how they came to such understanding and appraisal; how they attempted to promote multicultural awareness, appreciation, and competence in their students; and the obstacles they encounter in the process. Developing a common definition was not one of our intentions, nor were we interested in developing a curricular model of MCE. Our interest was solely in exploring faculty's perceptions and practices.

We were unable to find any systematic, cross-disciplinary study taking this type of exploratory, interpretative approach to examining and explaining MCE. We hope, therefore, that our find-

ings would begin to fill this void, and serve as a motivation and guide to further research.

Methodology

The research methodology involved structured focus group discussions. Letters were sent to 229 full-time and 54 part-time faculty at four of the Midwestern campuses, explaining the purpose of the study and soliciting their participation. Two-hour meetings were arranged on each campus and faculty were asked to indicate their choice of venue. Thirty one (31) faculty responded affirmatively, eighteen actually participated. Seventeen (17) participated in one of three focus groups, and one (1) participated in a personal interview. The gender and racial composition of the participants were as follows: 11 White women), 3 White men, 1 African- American woman, 1 African man, 1 African-American man, and 1 Asian woman. Four of the participants were natives of countries outside of the United States. Participants came from disciplines such as Mathematics, Early Childhood Education, Adult Education, Biology, Applied Behavioral Sciences, Human Services.

To enhance reliability, the researchers tried to maintain as best they could, "a disinterested observer" posture. We did this by using the same wording to introduce and explain the study, and in asking the questions. Five questions were asked:1) What value does MCE have for you?, 2) Whom or what do you include when you use the term multicultural?, 3) What critical incidents have occurred in you life that have contributed to your valuing MCE?, 4) What are the barriers to MCE that you face in your teaching, department, and/or the institution?, and 5) What is your most successful strategy for implementing MCE?

Findings

Question 1: The Value of MCE

Answers were grouped under three broad headings: pragmatic considerations, personal enrichment, and societal benefits. **Pragmatic considerations** refers to values associated with achieving some proximate ends. For instance, participants valued MCE because of its potential to increase tolerance and reduce conflicts among members of culturally diverse families or work places. Similarly, others valued it as an effective teaching strategy for reducing alienation or improving academic performance of students from non-dominant cultures. Many responses emphasized the **personally enriching** potential (cognitive and emotional) of MCE. And some responses highlighted **short-range** and **long-range societal benefits** to be accrued from MCE. MCE was variously offered as giving hope; providing an antidote to narrow-mindedness and bigotry; fostering understanding, respect, appreciation, and acceptance of cultural differences; promoting a

sense of common humanity; and ultimately, advancing the mission of social justice.

Question 2: Who or What Should Be Included?

Participants cited **nominal characteristics** (gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, age, isms, country of origin, region/geography, single parents, family types, class); **tradition** (i.e., customs and practices) such as mode of greeting, or dialect; and the **histories and experiences of individuals and groups** as worthy of inclusion in MCE. Some respondents felt everyone should be included. Some saw inclusion as going beyond superficial descriptions of persons, their histories, and traditions to analyses, of the **values and beliefs** (normative and universal) embedded in individual and group identities, histories, and traditions. It was repeatedly stressed that whatever was included ought to be **contextually determined**, on the bases of the **relative importance** of the issue to **persons involved**, and the **degree of disenfranchisement** it addressed.

Question 3: Critical Incidents

In retelling critical incidents, participants could be grouped in three major themes: **personal exposure to different cultural groups** (traveling abroad and tutoring students of color), **experiences of overt and covert racism, sexism, and other oppressions** (feeling rejected by a client due to perceived lack of empathy, racist hiring decisions, racism in shopping establishments, racism in restaurants, parental rejection of fiancee of color, witnessing peers subjected to racism as a child; subject to age, language, and gender bias in European travel), and **the experience of being different** (culture shock from one country to another or from city to suburban life; being the only White in a Black health club; being the only White on an Indian sports team; international travel).

Question 4: Barriers to MCE

Responses to this question were grouped in terms of the sources from which the barrier originated. Barriers originated in the faculty themselves, their colleagues, and in the institution as a whole. **Personal barriers** included: unwillingness to invest time and energy to secure appropriate multicultural information and resources; ignorance of differing cultural perspectives among students; uncertainty regarding the presentation of differing cultural perspectives without stereotyping; discomfort associated with taking risks; and difficulty in determining what to exclude.

Barriers related to the **attitude and experiences of colleagues** included: oblivion of perspectives other than one's own; fear of, and resistance to change; unfamiliarity with or denial of discrimination; and the belief that MCE is only appropriate for nondominant cultural groups.

Institutional barriers included: illusion on the part of university officials of doing a great deal when in fact their efforts are superficial; feeble efforts at creating affirming environments for women, students of color, and non-native English speakers; the public perception that this is a "White" university; insufficient efforts and commitment to recruiting and hiring minority faculty; little or no financial or organizational support for developing faculty, curricula, and MCE resources; decisions made by those who are oblivious to, or unfamiliar with, the issues and concerns of marginalized groups.

Question 5: Successful Strategies

Successful strategies used by faculty were the **adoption of flexible syllabi, delivery systems, teaching styles and methods of evaluation** that related to culturally diverse learning styles. Another was the **use of multicultural resources** such as guest speakers, or the incorporation of audio-visual materials, artifacts, foods, customs, practices, stories, biographies, examples etc., highlighting non-dominant perspectives. A third strategy involved **exposure to critical self-assessment**, including discussing instructors' and students' biases and prejudices, encouraging students to make personal connections with the material to their community, and to early experiences, particularly family experiences. Other strategies included infusion of multicultural issues in all courses, and the recruitment of students of color.

Discussion

In sum, the results of this study may indicate that MCE has value for faculty who have had significant personal experience of oppression, feeling different, or devalued in their personal lives. These experiences have created a concomitant interest in educating critically for issues of inclusion and social justice in the curriculum.

The value of MCE seemed to reflect pragmatic considerations, personal enrichment, and social benefit for participants. The values identified here, however, are not necessarily complimentary. For instance, pragmatic considerations might stymie opportunities for personal enrichment or broader social benefits. Similarly, when MCE is used solely for improving students' academic performance or reducing feelings of alienation, one might sacrifice intellectual rigor to boost results. Also, there is a tendency in business to use MCE as an economic strategy for "blowing away the competition." In such cases, little thought is given as to harm that might befall persons who are "blown away." On the other hand, an exclusive focus on societal benefits, narrowly conceived as group rights, may heighten group conflict or degenerate into ghettoization. Finally, a focus on personal enrichment to the exclusion of pragmatic considerations or social benefits

might be merely a flight of fantasy or an excuse for selfishness and greed. The task then is striving to keep the three goals in creative tension, allowing the absence of one to serve as a check on the other two.

All of the participants saw the educational **process** as open to multicultural infusion, albeit to varying degrees. Disagreement arose over what to do about educational **content**. Participants agreed that the humanities and social sciences were a prime target for infusion of multicultural content. But, few persons saw this as applicable to the hard sciences. There is a contradiction here; the same individuals who would readily quarantine the hard sciences from the infusion of multicultural content also believed that what is included ought to be determined **in situ** by **those involved**. This is not likely to occur when the body of so-called "scientific" knowledge is labelled "out of bounds." What undergirds this position is a positivistic world view that invites multicultural scrutiny.

Overt and covert racism were cited most frequently by participants in the critical incidents. Feelings of rejection and isolation due to cultural differences were repeatedly addressed by participants. They desired belonging and an affirmation of their identities, which often did not occur in the critical incidents. All responses were related to ethnic, racial, national, or religious/spiritual identity; age and gender discrimination also were mentioned. These results may indicate that for many participants, incidents of racism were central in motivating personal interest in multiculturalism, which has become a professional interest.

Myers (1988); Myers & Speight, (1994) wrote on optimal theory, which suggests that most respondents had their critical incidents within a culture with a suboptimal worldview, i.e., competitive and disparaging toward some groups of people as less than deserving of access to resources. In the multicultural education literature, Sleeter & Grant (1994) posit that of five approaches to multicultural education, the best one for social change is multicultural and social reconstructionist. The results of this study may indicate that based on critical incidents involving racism and other oppressions, subjects now seek to address inequity and justice as part of multicultural education. This interest is on a continuum, however, and may also be due to subjects' racial and cultural identity development levels (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Helms, 1990, 1992).

Lack of knowledge of where to obtain books and materials offering multicultural perspectives emerged as an obvious barrier to MCE. Sometimes the awareness was present, but faculty were unable or unwilling to put in the extra effort to seek them out.. Confronting issues of racism, sexism, and all the other

isms forced some respondents out of their comfort zones into a territory fraught with pain and confusion. Many participants recognized that their colleagues' lack of support came from a lack of awareness that their pedagogy included only mainstream ideologies. Colleagues were perceived to have had little contact with people from nondominant cultures and no personal experience with being oppressed. It is difficult to develop cultural sensitivity under these circumstances (Amstutz, 1994). It is even more difficult to bring about curricular change when departmental colleagues are at different levels of awareness and commitment. If a university is to be truly committed to multicultural education, attention must be given to hiring more faculty of color and other nondominant identities. Since not all faculty value multicultural education in similar ways, faculty development efforts need to start at the most basic levels of increasing awareness and move toward creating a more inclusive pedagogy.

The participants reported using various strategies to promote multiculturalism in their classrooms. Most felt that it was important for students to develop a level of self-awareness with examination of prejudice, bias, and reaction to others. Teachers reported feeling comfortable discussing their own feelings and encouraging discussions in the classroom. Many of the participants felt that students should not only be multiculturally sensitive within the educational fields, but have an impact on their community and environment. This addresses the importance and value of MCE, as it can be viewed as a method for improving relationships, confronting issues of social justice, and promoting sensitivity and compassion for others.

The participants also discussed the importance of flexibility, particularly when working with a diverse student body. Participants stated that they allowed students to present their understanding of material in various ways. The faculty discussed the importance of varying the learning process within the classroom, including focusing more on discussion and changing the content of the material presented. Participants felt that educators should be sensitive to culturally diverse learning styles.

Conclusion

This study explored how faculty come to understand and value multicultural education. The intent was not to come to a definition o the term; indeed, we as researchers could not agree on a defini ion. Instead, we attempted to phenomenologically explore the meaning of multicultural education for a group of faculty who chose to participate in the study. Chose was the operative word, and represents both a strength and limitation to the study. Through critical incidents, it was revealed that many of the participants' experienced some form of marginalization or being

treated differently either through their own experience or through someone close to them. These incidents contributed significantly to their valuing multicultural education and incorporating it into their practice to varying degrees. All of the participants had experienced some barriers in their attempts at multicultural education but they also had success stories, which they were able to share with their colleagues. The self-selection of the study may limit the generalizability of the results. However, it suggests the importance of personal experiences and integration of them as a way of promoting and developing multicultural awareness and sensitivity for faculty.

Our study is just a beginning in understanding the importance and value of MCE across disciplines. Future research should further explore this issue, determine appropriate faculty development strategies, and focus on examining critical incidents of nondominant cultures in addition to race/ethnicity.

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ASSESSMENT

Innovations in the Assessment of Experiential Learning

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Vic Olsen, Michael Torello
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Introduction

The practice of awarding academic credit for experiential learning has become an accepted component of contemporary educational practice. By last count, six hundred colleges and universities have comprehensive programs to assess experiential learning, and more than 1200 programs have at least some mechanism for assessing prior learning (C.A.E.L., 1992; C.A.E.L. & A.C.E., 1993). A number of factors have lead to the recognition of experiential learning (see Ashbrook, Smith, & McGary, 1993); for example: (a) expanded access to education for minorities, women and the economically impoverished; (b) social reconstruction pedagogy calling for the democratization of education; (c) acceptance of adult learning theories; and (d) national emphasis on the assessment of learning outcomes. The net effect of these factors has been a dramatic increase in numbers of adult learners on college campuses, a change that has carried with it the evolution of new administrative and course delivery structures, e.g., adult degree programs, and new conceptions of the role experience plays in the acquisition of learning outcomes. For example, contemporary learning theories recognize learning and thinking as embedded in and derived from everyday situations (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Derry, 1992; Scribner, 1984; Wilson, 1993)- an assumption that provides credence to experiential learning practice and challenges adult and traditional higher education to embrace non-traditional methods (Ashbrook & McGary, 1994).

Despite the recent advances in learning theory, the practice of awarding experiential learning credit has remained fairly stagnant. Accepted practices are adopted by schools new to the business of prior learning, often times purchased as pre-packaged, prescriptive products, while existing programs continue their practices relying on early guidelines for quality assessment. Thus, while there may be more programs than ever before recognizing experiential learning, there has not been a corresponding expansion of the assessment literature. In fact, the opposite is true; regional accrediting agencies have begun to tighten controls over the award of experiential learning and, in some circumstances, erode the hard-won recognition of experiential learning outcomes.

Therefore, this paper introduces readers to some of the variants of prior learning procedures by presenting the current practices at Capital University, a pioneer in the recognition of experiential learning that has awarded prior learning credit since 1979. Attention will be given to the thorny issues - the debates that embroil the monthly meetings of the University Competency Assessment Panel at Capital University, where for over a decade experiential learning policy and procedure have undergone gradual refinement and revision.

An Overview of the Capital's Experiential Learning Program

In many ways, experiential learning at Capital University resembles similar programs around the country, as Capital, like other institutions, have relied on active participation in professional associations, such as C.A.E.L. and The Alliance, to establish and to follow common standards. Therefore, the following list provides only a brief summary of the procedures, while the interested reader is referred to a more expansive document, *The Capital University Guide to Experiential Learning*.

- Any currently enrolled student (adult learner or traditional student) is eligible to receive experiential learning credit at anytime during his/her enrollment at the University, though students are asked to submit related requests together (e.g., courses from the same department).

- There are three basic steps to requesting experiential learning credit: (a) identifying learning outcomes to determine areas of college-level learning; (b) research courses from regionally accredited colleges to determine appropriate course models; and (c) prepare a statement of experiential learning - a portfolio.

- Any undergraduate course offered by a regionally accredited college or university may serve as a model for requesting experiential learning credit. In rare circumstances, students may design their own course models.

- Experiential learning may have occurred at any time during the life of student. Though usually the learning will have occurred prior to admission, students may request experiential learning credit for learning outcomes attained after enrolling at the University, so long as those learning outcomes were not part of a course for which the student already has received credit.

- Experiential learning credit may be used to fulfill degree

requirements, including general education or core curriculum requirements, unless the practice is prohibited by an external agency that awards licensure or certification. The department or major, or Degree Review Committee, in the case of multi disciplinary majors, decides which credit fulfills major requirements.

- There is no limit to the number of hours a student may earn for his/her experiential learning. There is no cost for assessment for the first 30 credit hours requested, nor are there any additional fees charged, such as for transcript posting, etc.

- Partial credit for a course model may be awarded by the Panel. No grade is assigned to credit from experiential learning, and for most purposes, experiential learning is treated the same as transfer course work.

- Students may optionally enroll in a course designed to help them discover their experiential learning and prepare their portfolios for assessment. Three credits are awarded for the course. Techniques, such autobiography and chronology of life events, are sometimes used in the course, but these course products are not submitted in the student's portfolio.

- Self-assessment is an important component of developing a portfolio. Students are required to locate a course model that closely matches their learning outcomes. Based on the course description, the syllabus, and/or the text, students identify a list of content areas (major areas of learning). Next, students list their relevant life experiences next to each content area and state the method they will use to demonstrate their learning outcomes.

- A variety of methods may be used by students to demonstrate their learning outcomes. The narrative statement of learning outcomes remains one of the most convincing forms of documentation. In narrative statements, students typically describe experiences that led to learning, then discuss specific learning outcomes in the context of their life experiences.

- Another important and often convincing method of documentation is a student's instructional history. Students

participation in organized courses of study (e.g., non-accredited educational institutions, company-sponsored training, apprenticeship programs, correspondence courses) and information on students' licensure, certification and examination history are conveyed on a form that relates aspects of training (hours spent in course related activity) to the course model.

- A Panel of faculty evaluate and award experiential learning credit. The Panel is comprised of representatives from each unit or college - Arts & Sciences, Nursing, Music Conservatory, Adult Degree Program - and membership includes traditional and adult degree program faculty, each representative serving a three-year staggered term.

- When needed expertise cannot be found on the Panel, other institutional faculty or external assessors (faculty from other colleges and universities or local leaders in business, industry, government, social services or the arts) are asked to lend advice to the Panel.

- Each Panel member reads every portfolio and arrives at an individual recommendation and writes brief comments about their assessment. Monthly meetings are held to discuss and debate the individual recommendations, and eventually, to vote on the credit hours to be awarded.

- The Panel's decision is communicated to students along with a brief summary of the Panel's discussion. Students may resubmit their request one time to supply additional information.

Issues in Experiential Learning Assessment

We begin our discussion of each issue in this section by a question - a question we will pose to participants at the paper presentation and illustrate with a brief vignette or simulation from one of our Panel meetings. The intention is not so much to provide answers (though to the extent that our Panel has answered them, we will explain our rationale), but rather, we believe these questions are ones that deserve discussion, conversations that may begin to elaborate on the principles and challenges underlying the recognition of experiential learning.

1. What constitutes experiential learning?

Historically, the recognition of experiential learning developed as a mechanism to award academic credit to adult learners who, through life experiences, had attained college-level learning

outcomes (See Keeton, 1976, for a discussion of the early history of this movement.). Prior learning was recognized; that is, learning prior to enrollment in regionally accredited institutions of higher education. In part, this practice was begun because employers placed a premium on the baccalaureate degree over certificates of completion from proprietary technical schools. Now, so many years later, another trend has emerged; corporations have accepted responsibility for training their workers. For instance, AT&T estimated thirty thousand of its over one million person work force attended company-sponsored classes on any given day (McNeil, 1985). If these workers are engaged in corporate training that happens to be equivalent to college-level learning outcomes while enrolled in an institution of higher education, then should their learning outcomes be recognized by the institution? We believe college level learning outcomes should be recognized wherever and whenever, and to whomever they occur - a belief that yields two further correlates. One, traditional students should be entitled to the recognition of their experiential learning outcomes. Thus, it has been our practice from the beginning of the experiential learning program at Capital in 1979 to consider traditional undergraduate students as eligible to receive experiential learning credit, though few have until rather recently, a change which we find, in part, attributable to the national assessment movement and our own initiation of a competency-based core curriculum. Two, freeing the idea of "priorness" from our policies on experiential learning has led some students to the independent design of learning activities while enrolled at Capital. For instance, traditional students have spent summers engaged in activities from which college-level learning outcomes result, and adult students are selecting corporate-sponsored training that matches college course models.

2. Who should assess experiential learning?

Programs assess experiential learning in a number of ways. One common approach is to appoint certain faculty, often those who also are members of the adult degree program, as assessors. Many programs use a single assessor, for instance an "expert" in the discipline which is being assessed. The rationale for this practice is obvious: Adult degree faculty are supportive of the practice of awarding experiential learning credit and an expert assessor - a specialist - would be the most familiar with a topic. At Capital, as in some other institutions, we have chosen to use a panel approach to assessment, and furthermore, our panel membership is comprised of both discipline experts and generalists, liberal arts faculty from various disciplines, who represent the whole of the undergraduate faculty, including faculty who only teach in the traditional programs.

We believe there are important advantages to this approach. Multiple assessors, especially when their terms of appointment are staggered, preserve a consistency in Panel actions over time. New members learn the ways of the Panel from senior members. Plus, since faculty who do not teach adult learners also serve terms on the Panel, nearly a fifth of our traditional faculty now have experience with the evaluation of experiential learning. The result has been a greater acceptance of the adult degree program and an increased awareness of non-traditional assessment methods among traditional faculty, many of whom have adapted techniques from our adult program to their traditional classes. Moreover, we believe panel assessors, even when operating outside their area of expertise, can provide reliable assessment, a belief supported by calculations of inter-rater reliability in the high .70s. The discipline expert, untempered by other Panel members, can be a peevish sort, clinging closely to a set of expectations that few college graduates attain, but the opposite also is true in that the specialist on the Panel instructs other members on the core learning outcomes expected of a course in his/her discipline.

3. What to we mean by "college-level learning"?

Panel members devote a surprising amount of time debating the definition of college- level learning. There are rules of thumb that guide our discussion and decisions. For instance, we say both the general principle and its application are the usual outcomes that signify college-level learning, or that learning is college-level if: (a) the learning is applicable outside the situation in which it was acquired; and (b) the learning integrates practical and theoretical knowledge. Panel members are trained to the literature of adult education that informs us of the differences between experiential and classroom learning, for instance, the idea that the sequence with which information is acquired differs between the two (Coleman, 1976), but just as consensus is reached regarding a particular case, we are presented with another portfolio which defies our understanding of college-level and gives way to more debate. Recent research on situated cognition (Wilson, 1993), along with anthropological studies of everyday cognition (Lave, 1988; Rogoff & Lave, 1984), re-inventions of radical behaviorism (Hayes & Hayes, 1992) and the burgeoning discourse on radical constructivism (von Glassersfeld, 1984; 1990) only complicate matters for it seems all learning is based in situations. Furthermore, to the extent that traditional college-level learning attempts to isolate information from context, learning of the college-level kind may be the least desirable.

As a practical matter, we have adopted the workable, but not always sufficient, criterion of comparing students' learning outcomes to course models from regionally accredited schools. Thus,

college-level learning is whatever the course description and syllabus tells us it is. After all, learning from regionally accredited institutions is accepted as transfer credit to most institutions. Unfortunately, our abstract definitions of the college-level do not mesh well with some course models, for instance, those from technical programs that emphasize discrete skills over theoretical principles. And, we sometimes have stepped back from our deliberations about what is college-level to examine what cultural and social biases we bring to the assessment table. For instance, we might wonder why it is more difficult to award academic credit for typing than it is to award credit for mechanical drawing; could it be an instance of gender bias filtered through stereotypical occupational choice which favors male over female learner outcomes. Since life, as we might expect, often is richer than academe, and our students and their experiences more varied and perhaps more significant than the artificial distinctions between course and discipline, we permit the student to have some say in what is college level. Students, in exceptional cases, may offer their own course models, leaving Panel members to debate the meaning of college-level learning.

4. To what extent should experiential learning programs recognize non-accredited instruction?

A number of our students have been enrolled in non-accredited training programs prior to their matriculation to Capital. For instance, students might have extensive corporate training, especially in business, communications and computer science, or diplomas from proprietary schools, such as diploma schools of nursing, paralegal institutes, aviation institutes, law enforcement academies or trade apprenticeship programs. In almost every case, regionally accredited colleges and universities can be found which offer similar programs, often with matching course descriptions and similarly qualified instructors. In such cases, is it necessary to require these students to prepare elaborate portfolios of their learning outcomes with extensive narrative discussions, or is it sufficient to only require enough evidence to document an equivalency between the accredited and non-accredited programs?

A related complication is the situation in which a student's experiential learning, say in an organized course of study, took place many years prior to their request for credit. If their course work was from an accredited institution, most colleges would accept their transfer credit, but is the award of experiential learning credit justified if the documented learning outcomes are out-of-date by contemporary standards in a discipline? At Capital, we award credit based on a current accredited course model; therefore, we generally believe experiential learning credit should

be awarded for learning outcomes that match current content areas.

5. Do non-narrative methods of documentation demonstrate learning outcomes?

The narrative statement remains the most common method by which students document their learning outcomes. Proficient writing yields effective narratives and students who convey material clearly and coherently are more likely to receive the amount of credit they request. The emphasis on clear, written expression discriminates against students who write poorly, but who may, if assessed differently, be capable of conveying their learning outcomes. Whether this form of discrimination is justified can be a matter of contention. On one hand, competent written expression seems a minimal expectation for college graduates, but on the other hand, some individuals may be disabled writers, who as a result of cognitive impairment, may be incapable of clear, articulate written expression. When such individuals meet certain diagnostic criteria, they are eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act for special testing accommodations. Other students, those, for instance, who as a result of their preferred learning styles speak better than write, may find narrative statements difficult to prepare, and sometimes such students might present oral presentations to the Panel. By similar reasoning, would it also be fair to permit all students access to multiple methods of demonstrating their learning outcomes? In addition, some subjects and content areas lend themselves to performance assessment, rather than written assessment. At Capital we continue to emphasize narrative statements of learning outcomes, but we also encourage students to utilize multiple forms documentation. In a few circumstances, a portfolio might be considered without any form of traditional narrative statement, for instance, in cases where performance is clearly the best criterion of a learning outcome, e.g., conversational fluency in a foreign language, or where a student's learning style or cognitive disability makes written expression an impediment to the documentation of their learning outcomes.

Conclusion

There ought not to be right answers to many of our questions - no single solutions or absolute methods - nor is ever it our intention to offer the practices we have found effective at our institution as ones that others must follow. Rather, the choice to award academic credit for experiential learning must reflect an institution's mission; it should be an extension of faculty values, and its methods an expression of service to the constituencies and stakeholders in the college or university community. Our

goal as participants in this larger community is to make others mindful, aware of issues that confront us as we go about our business of adult education. With that in mind, James Harrington's recent advice is relevant: "Perhaps a useful touchstone in all this is the reminder that college credit is the currency of our profession and its value depends, in large measure, on a widely shared consensus about what college credit means, what it stands for, what is symbolizes. The profession of adult education exists, in part, to find and challenge, but not transgress the outer edges of that consensus."

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Transformative Learning and Prior Learning Assessment

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Five years ago I began my professional journey in higher education. Through a referral from a colleague, I was hired as an adjunct instructor to direct students in developing their prior learning assessment (PLA) portfolios. I discovered that PLA is one of the most challenging and rewarding educational experiences, both for the instructor and for the student. I believe that a well-structured PLA process changes students' thinking not only about their pasts, but about the present and their futures, as well.

Most often, PLA is marketed to students as a way to lessen the time and money they will need to expend to complete a degree. Students subsequently enter a course or other directed process associated with PLA for the practical purpose of earning college units for their life experiences. While the successful petitioning of units for prior learning is a valid and important outcome, it is not the only outcome of an educationally sound PLA program. Outcomes which are just as valid include changes in how students view their past fears and limitations, how they understand their prior learning processes, and how they perceive their future personal and intellectual growth and actions.

The relationship between the strategic outcome of earned units and the outcome of transformative learning should not surprise those of us involved in the education of adult learners. Mezirow (1991, p. 7) reminds us that development through adulthood is directly connected to an enhanced capacity to validate prior learning through reflective discourse and to act upon the resulting insights. When students are required to present their life experiences as college-level learning, they must engage in intensive self-reflection. Mezirow (1991, p. 87) notes that reflection becomes critical reflection when it involves questioning prior actions and presuppositions, exploring connections between their experiences and other contexts, and making evaluative judgments about alternative actions and consequences. Just as self-reflection can take on the dimensions of critical reflection, Mezirow (1991, p. 6) states that critical reflection becomes transformative learning when questioned assumptions are deemed distorting, invalid, or inauthentic. Transformative learning not only gives new meaning to the former experience, it also creates new perspectives and understandings which are carried forth into new

experiences.

Cranton (1994, p. 144) reminds us, however, that the goal of transformative learning is not pregiven just because it is a desired learning outcome. Learners must have some openness to participating in critical reflection, and educators must accept their responsibility to foster that reflection. In order to do so, instructors and others involved in PLA need to look at their own assumptions about the purpose of PLA, the role of the educator, the structure of the PLA process, and the learning strategies and methods used in the PLA process.

In a PLA course, the instructor is not the content expert for each area of life experience which students bring to the process. This change in role of the instructor is often difficult for students to accept as many of them see the instructor as the holder and deliverer of knowledge. This is often the first assumption students need to reexamine as they realize that it is they, indeed, who are the holders of knowledge and the experts within the contexts of their experiences. This difficult shift in perspective may seem ironic, since it is the students' presumed expertise that led them to engage in the PLA process in the first place.

Likewise, the instructor needs to understand his or her changed role. The instructor is now the facilitator who, in Cranton's (1994) words "responds to the needs of the learners, fosters effective group process, provides support and encouragement, and builds a trusting relationship with [and among] the learners, is non-judgmental, and accepts and respects learners as they are" (p. 127). Accepting this role is extremely critical to the transformative learning process.

There are many ways for an instructor or advisor to take an active role in guiding students in critical reflection. Presenting models of learning and knowing is a common PLA strategy. The Kolb Cycle (1981) is probably the most referenced model of learning associated with PLA. Kolb's four-stage cycle uses two polarities: 1) concrete experience (personal, intuitive, affective) / abstract conceptualization (generalizable) and 2) reflective observation (analysis) / active experimentation (reapplication or prediction) (pp. 235-237). Sheckley and Keeton (1994/1995, p.10) refer to the first polarity as grasping knowledge and the second polarity as transforming knowledge through thinking or action.

The Kolb Cycle can seem very abstract to students, particularly to those students who have trouble moving out of their preferred learning style. Instructors, or others advising and guiding students in PLA, need to find instructional strategies to make the Kolb Cycle more concrete. I often model going through the Kolb Cycle. I start one example with my direct experience and another with an abstract concept. The idea is to show

students that engagement in learning can start with either of these "grasping" modes. Then I move the examples through the two "transforming" modes, thinking out answers to what, why, and how questions as part of reflective observation and presenting a reapplication of a principle to test out my previous conclusions or making an evaluative judgment. I try to use different examples that I have not taken through the Kolb Cycle before. In this way students can participate in the "thinking out" with me. Students can also practice identifying elements of the Kolb Cycle in their own or others' writing. By comparing their designations, students help each other discover the inter relatedness of the elements and complexity of thinking required in applying the Kolb Cycle to their experiences.

The modes of knowing developed by Belenky et al. (1986) provide an alternative framework to assist students in moving out of their own situatedness. Each of the five modes is a different understanding of reality and of the relationship between knowledge and authority. While the researchers initially used their findings to promote a clearer and louder voice for women's experiences, Belenky (1995) challenged educators to help students of both genders become Constructive Knowers (Belenky et al., 1986, pp. 137-44) or what Mezirow (1991) terms more "inclusive, discriminating, and integrative" (p. 167) in their perspectives.

Again, it is important to give students the opportunity to work with the modes of knowing. I ask students to write about experiences which exemplify one or more of the modes knowing and to share their experiences in like-mode groups. Each group then draws a picture of that way of knowing. This activity not only concretizes the otherwise abstract concepts, it also often reveals the limitations of a particular mode of knowing. For example, one group of students drew Subjective Knowing (Belenky et al. , 1986, pp. 62-70) as a *cul de sac* with a car going round-and-round—going somewhere but always to the same places.

As students attempt to express their experiences in terms of learning outcomes or competencies, they often have difficulty looking beyond Subjective Knowing or Procedural Knowing (Belenky et al., 1986) or their concrete experience. In one of my classes, we referred to this as finding and stating "the elephant"—that bigger-than-the- individual principle that students are warned, in other educational settings, not to make on the basis of their experience alone. Many students are uncertain about stating generalizations (abstract concepts) because as Received Knowers (Belenky et al. , 1986, pp. 36-45), they believe that theorizing is only appropriate for "other" authorities. Yet generalizations are essential to the experiential learning process because they extend the individual and purely personal into the

realm of the shared and decontexualized.

To help students move toward transformative learning, instructors need to ask the students different kinds of questions about their experiences to initiate critical reflection. As Cranton (1994, pp. 48-52) explains, learners can engage in critical reflection about content (description of a problem), process (problem-solving strategies), or premise (the problem itself) and within Mezirow's (1991) different meaning perspectives—the epistemic (knowledge and the use of knowledge), the sociolinguistic (social-cultural norms, assumptions, and language codes) and the psychological (self-concept and identity). Cranton (1994, p. 51) provides a chart of the types of questions that are relevant to each of these designations and I developed questions categorized according to the Kolb Cycle and Ways of Knowing (Figure 1).

As instructors precipitate critical reflection through their questioning, they act as "provocateur's " (Cranton, 1994, p. 141). Instructors need to take this role very seriously. When students are asked to reconsider the various aspects and consequences of their experiences, they often enter a state of disequilibrium. In this state students may encounter a high degree of frustration and anxiety. Instructors must be sensitive to the emotionality that is often part of critical reflection process. I remember the resistance of one student who couldn't understand why I kept asking questions about her traumatic childhood experience. As a Subjective Knower she continued to say, "But all I know is what happened to me." Other students may exhibit their anxiety with late or missing assignments. Here again, the instructor must take care to be supportive, non-judgmental and respectful, while at the same time gently challenging the student toward a more integrative understanding of the life experience under review.

Those involved in PLA should take seriously the opportunity to assess not only the more instrumental and quantifiable outcome of earned units, but also the transformative one. I discovered the transformative outcomes mostly by accident. I developed an introductory activity, *Circles of Life*, to help students see the connection between the past, present and future in preparation for their autobiographies. At the end of the course I developed *Circles of Life Revisited* (Figure 2). I decided that it was just as important for students to engage in self-reflection to assess what they experienced in the PLA process as it was for them to evaluate the course and the instructor. I had intended that the assessments would be confidential. However, I discovered that most students were interested in sharing their discoveries both with each other and with me.

From an analysis of the student responses it is evident that many students came to new understandings within Mezirow's

(1991) psychological, epistemic, and the sociolinguistic meaning perspectives. Within the psychological domain, adult learners often hold distorted perspectives tied previous educational failures or prior personal experiences. They are anxious and fearful in a new educational setting. Typical responses from my students, as they reflected back to the beginning of the course, were: " I was scared of failure and thought I was too old to fit in"; "I feared what I did not know"; "I wondered if everyone else would be smarter than me; "My assumptions about the past were that I was somehow bound by it." Some articulated the changes in their perspectives tied to going through the PLA course. They expressed "new-found confidence," "more positive self-perception," and the "elimination of most of the fears of going to school." Even more striking were the comments of two students: "Lack of a completed education does not make me inferior"; "[I discovered] some successes with lots of meanings that

[I have] taken for granted"; and " I actually filled in some of the gaps that I had been unable to accept."

Prior to the PLA process, students may not actually acknowledge how much they have learned through experience because of the assumptions they hold about learning and about how knowledge is acquired (the epistemic domain). Some students clearly noted in the assessment that they had expected what Cranton (1994) describes as Subject-Oriented education (1994, pp. 10-11). One student stated: " I expected to be taught through the normal process all that I needed to know about this course." Another wrote, "I assumed that my past was insignificant and my abilities mediocre. I considered learning the ability to quote experts and regurgitate information. Learning was something I was going after, not something I already had." And a third explained even more eloquently, "Although I believed that self-learning was a valid way to gain knowledge, I assumed others would not hold it in high regard. I also assumed that a body of knowledge gained in this manner would necessarily be less complete than that gained thorough formal education. I learned that much of my experience does equate with complete bodies of knowledge and that I am capable of pulling that knowledge together in a comprehensive format."

In the sociolinguistic domain, students gave evidence that they could recognize and analyze the operation of cultural standards and expectations. In the words of one student," Our culture teaches us to be a little wary and anxious about returning to school in a way by depicting all college students as young, very young, people." Another student mentioned finding that "there are many answers and interpretations to life experience." One student's comments cut across both the psychological and the

sociolinguistic domains as he reflected on his own situation and what I believe were his previously-internalized cultural standards : " . . . the people are very much like me and they are sincere and worthy of my trust. . . . I have been a sort of privileged character for many years; the group has humbled me without humiliating me. I will in the future pay more attention to other people and enjoy learning from them. Even with our diversity, it amazes me how much we are alike. I will be more patient with people with fewer blessings than I have been given."

Finally, many students expressed that they would be different in the future because of their new perspectives. Two mentioned changing their management styles and their assumptions about how their staffs will learn; another, more willingness to share his fears with others; another, "trying to look at things from an outsider's point of view." The words of two students point to a desire to be more inclusive and discriminating learners. The first commented: " I am more willing to consider other viewpoints, explore new ways of doing things, and take responsibility for the end result process itself." The other poignantly stated, "There are new areas to see within my limits."

While many students found it difficult to state the questions they would ask about experience and learning as they approached new situations, some were able to articulate questions that indicated they would become more Constructed Knowers (Belenky, et al., 1986). They spoke about valuing their own perspectives but also recognizing the importance of their peers and authorities in particular fields. One mentioned trying to discover society's values as reflected in laws and religious writings. Another wrote about considering the influence of the past on present judgments, and still another about trying to see how one's experience can affect someone else.

Not all students will change as profoundly as some of the students referenced here. However, very few , if any, will leave the PLA process the same as they began if they have the opportunity to appreciate and question learning and experience in new ways. This opportunity must be interpreted by educators in PLA as unique responsibility. Accepting this responsibility means understanding critical reflection and transformative learning, carefully structuring the learning environment, dutifully supporting students' in their struggles, and rejoicing with them as they accomplish more than either the instructor or students ever imagined when process began.

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Outcomes Study for SUNY/Empire State College's Independent Business Education Program

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THE EMERGENCE OF OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Although educational institutions have implemented various types of evaluations of their programs throughout the years, the 1980's marks the emergence of assessment in higher education. A number of concerns have converged to give rise to this phenomenon. For one, the notion of quality as a goal to help U.S. businesses compete in the global economy has been embraced by all sectors of society, including the public sector and the educational world. While some are critical of the effort to draw parallels between outputs in the business work and those in education, others, who also recognize the complexity of benefits of education, have used this opportunity to better describe and document the benefits.

Secondly, as in the business world, the public sector has been impacted by finite resources and competing demands for the shrinking pool of funds. Politicians who must address the issue of allocating funds to higher education are eager to understand where the funds go, how they are being spent, and, most importantly, whether the tax payers are getting their money's worth. (Boulard, 1988, Fiske, 1987) In 1984, then Virginia governor Charles Robb coupled the concern for quality with the public fiscal responsibility and stated: "There is no question in my mind that the public is ready to pay for [college] quality....But the public is not ready to pay for a mere continuation of the status quo, because the status quo is no longer good enough." (Cox, 1986).

A third factor related to the increasing concern about the preparation of a well-trained work force. Business people and government leaders have turned to educational institutions and asked whether the educational institutions are graduating students with the competencies our economy needs.

And finally, pressure has come form within higher education, also. Two influential reports about assessment emerged in the 1980s: *Involvement in Learning* (Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, National Institute of Education, 1984) and *Integrity in the College Curriculum* (Association for American Colleges, 1985). The ACC report was particularly blunt, referring to the absence of institutional accountability.

NEW ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

In addition to increased activity related to assessment, educational institutions are involved in new kinds of assessment methods. Moving away from the objective tests which were developed in the 1950's when machine scorable testing became available to accommodate the mass processing of students, the current assessment movement is reclaiming and extending a variety of assessment methodologies, including self-evaluation (Banta, 1993) and open-ended programs, simulations and case studies (Curry, Wergin and Associates, 1993, p. , p. 247). Dissatisfied with the predictability of grades and test scores (Samson, Graue, Weinstein and Walberg, 1984, p. 320), educators are looking at new forms of evaluation, including strategies designed by business "assessment centers" which have proliferated in the last thirty years to screen, select, classify and place employees. (Erwin, 1991, p. 14; Gangler, Rosenthal, Thornton, and Bentson, 1987)

There has also been a shift in what is being assessed. Going beyond the assessment of the knowledge of classroom subject matter, evaluators have come to believe that lasting outcomes of higher education center on the cognitive and affective development of students. (Banta, 1993, p. 179) This means that assessment of critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills has been added. Those involved especially in professional education are interested in which aspects of college learning effect performance. They have been influenced by the writing of Schon (1983, 1987) who described the goal of professional education as one which provides students with "technical" knowledge and "reflective" knowledge. The former represents the precise formulations which can be taught in the classroom. The "reflective" aspect of learning can take place only in practice. Use, know-how, insight, as well as "judgement and wise action in complex, unique, and uncertain situations with conflicting values and ethical stances (Harris, 1993) characterize "the reflective practitioner". (Schon, 1983).

THE HISTORY OF ASSESSMENT AT SUNY/EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE

Assessment, in various forms, has been valued by Empire State College since its establishment in 1971. As an institution devoted to adult learners, it has contributed significantly to the unique issues involved in approaching program outcomes with adult students.

Part of the State University of New York, Empire State College has a distinctive mission and educational approach, including the following elements:

- An individualized degree program developed by the student in consultation with faculty, joining the student's educational goals and the guidelines of the college.
- A flexible curriculum, incorporating broad areas of multidisciplinary study and modes of inquiry
- Individualized learning designed, based on a learning contract between student and tutor
- Independent learning, providing flexibility in time, place and manner of learning
- Learning which tapes a variety of learning resources, pedagogies and technologies (most recently on-line computer-based learning)
- Dispersed and decentralized college organization, providing 44 points of access across New York State

Outcomes assessment efforts of Empire State College have focused in the past primarily on three major strategies: review of student degree portfolios, assessment of student writing, and student surveys and self-reports. (Banta, 1993, pp. 128-129). In 1985 the regional center in Central New York developed a study program called FORUM for managers seeking their bachelor's degrees while continuing their professional obligations. (In the past five years the program has been replicated in Western New York, Eastern New York and Downstate/Southern New York.) Growing out of and wedded to the unique features of the college, it added a 'residency" opportunity which brings the students/managers together for two days six times a year. At that time the students meet together in study groups, since they select the majority of their study topics from a common list of offerings. Because the students have to be sponsored by their employers, the college is obliged to address the needs of two customers: the students and their employers.

The four FORUM programs are tied together by the FORUM Advisory Board which oversees policy and academic quality. As part of its interest in continuous improvement and wanting to demonstrate accountability to students and their employers for the resources invested in the program, the FORUM Advisory Board, in the fall of 1994, initiated the FORUM Outcome Study, under the direction of D. Meg Benke. Following initial design work the project was transferred to Dr. Carolyn C. Shadle for refinement and implementation. She was assisted by student intern, Mr. Christopher Stone. Since the assessment is a work-in-progress, this paper describes only the objectives, design and implementation plans for the study. A report of the implementation, data analysis and uses of the information gathered must await a future report.

BUILDING THE ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Consistent with perspectives outlined above, the Board agreed that the anticipated outcomes of the FORUM program were not only skills and content knowledge but also the development of higher-order reasoning, affective development and what Erwin calls "habits of the mind", such as intellectual tolerance and persistence. (Erwin, 1991, p. xiii.) The Board also outlined areas of interest relating to marketing the program. The members wanted to understand the motivations of students and sponsors and how well the program prepares graduates for workplace responsibilities and for further graduate study.

The early tasks involved, first, identifying exact competencies and areas of interest to be surveyed and, second, designing a survey utilizing multiple research methodologies. In addition to reviewing concerns of the members of the FORUM Advisory Board, scanning the literature and sample surveys was useful in developing a list of survey areas and possible questions. Previous Empire State College surveys as well as the survey of important competencies developed by Alliance, An Association for Alternative Degree Programs for Adults, (Adult Learning Outcomes Project, 1995) were reviewed. Readers may also find helpful the work of Lenning (1977), who has identified eighty—nine distinct classifications of outcomes, eight of which focus primarily in noncognitive outcomes. Also useful is the work of Fine (1986, p. 68), who lists forty-two critical performance categories, all of which are noncognitive.

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

It was decided to do the study in three parts: Part I utilizes a questionnaire to be sent to all 318 graduates of the FORUM program. It is primarily quantitative with some opportunity for open-ended qualitative responses. Part II utilizes three cases to which students will respond. Part III will involve interviews with a selected number of the sponsors who employ the students/ managers.

PART I of the Study

Part I contains seven sections. Section I seeks information relating to students' reasons for completing their college education. They will be asked to rate the importance of various reasons related to career improvement, academic goals, personal development and social cultural participation goals. Sections II and III seek information about competencies. Section II is an open-ended question inviting students to describe, in their own words, the competencies they believe are important to continuous learning. Section III lists 70 competencies in five categories:

Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Inquiry and Analysis, General Education (including such competencies are working independently, identifying issues that reflect public policy, interpret literary works, thinking in terms of systems), and Application of Knowledge and Skills (including such items are the roles of a manager, connecting theory to practice, understanding economics). The information sought in this section is growth. Therefore, for each item graduates were asked to rate their degree of competency prior to enrollment in the FORUM program and, on a separate line, to rate their competency upon completing their college education. Section IV seeks information about the graduates' perception of the academic challenge provided for them in the FORUM program (for example, i research or in writing), the reasons the students chose the FORUM program (e.g. self-fulfillment, requirement of employers, etc.) and their level of satisfaction with the program. Section V will gather information about graduate studies undertaken or anticipated by FORUM graduates. Section VI seeks information about the impact of the FORUM program on career or professional outcomes. And Section VII asks students to rate the overall effectiveness of the FORUM program and the factors which impacted their success. Section VIII gathers demographic information.

PART II of the Study

Using case studies, Part II of the study attempts to evaluate the "reflective" practitioner. Since all of the FORUM students are employed concurrently with their studies, there is ample opportunity for students to relate theory to practice. The goal of Part II is to measure growth in that area. Three cases will be provided to each in-coming student with questions for his or her response. A panel of experts, who are practitioners drawn from the ranks of the programs' sponsors, will review the students' responses. Each students' case responses will be reviewed by two experts. The process will then be repeated when the students graduate.

Six brief (2-3 pages) extant cases were selected from general management or operations texts and curriculum. They were circulated among the program directors, and three selected for implementation. Meanwhile, expert evaluators were invited to review and rate the responses to four sets of three cases (one for each of four students). The rating involves areas such as the student's written communication skills, understanding of human behavior, ability to define the boundaries and elements of the problem, ability to reduce the problem to a sequential series of tasks, ability to exercise judgement in developing and evaluating alternatives, ability to connect theory to practice, etc.

PART III of the Study

Part III of the study is designed to elicit input from the corporate employers who have sponsored the graduates in the survey. Planned are face-to-face interviews to be conducted by the directors of the various FORUM program. Each will talk to 4-6 employers, using the same set of questions. A draft of the questions was circulated to the FORUM Academic Advisory Task Force in Central New York, and members responded with queries and suggestions which assisted in focusing the questions more clearly. The general intent of the interview questions is to understand to what extent the sponsors and the college share common goals, how satisfied sponsors are with the education the students review from FORUM, and suggestions sponsors might have for change.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

While all research projects have their limitations, it is the expectation of the FORUM Advisory Board that the multiple methodologies used in this survey will assist in overcoming some of the limitations by drawing upon the strengths inherent in each method.

The questionnaire used in Part I relies on self-report. It is expected that this instrument will bring us valuable information. Bard (1976) , who has reviewed self-reporting surveys, who has concluded that students report their perceptions honestly.

The small size of some segments of the sample may, however, create a limitation. Although there are 319 graduates, three of the FORUM locations began operations only in the last five years and therefore have a relatively small number of graduates. On the other hand, data, including the open-ended qualitative data on the survey, will surface issues important for further exploration.

Terminology is always a problem. As Banta has pointed out (1988), "people mean different things when they use such terms as values, attitudes, understanding, appreciation, motivation and perception. Because many of our questions in all three parts deal with noncognitive areas, we will undoubtedly have to face this reality. However, as Banta goes on to say, it is the behavior that will indicate the desired outcome and the words one chooses "matters little, so long as they represent the outcome of concern." (Banta, 1988, p. 48) The cases in Part II, therefore, may serve as a corrective, giving us an opportunity to assess outcomes involving practice. As McGaghie points out, the use of open-ended problems and cases or situations is a positive response to the widespread sentiment that tests of acquired knowledge have been "far too narrow to capture the richness of professional practice." (McGahie, p. 247)

Case studies, however, are not without their problems. They cannot accommodate an algorithmic, one-best-answer approach to scoring, and that makes those of us reviewing and utilizing the data nervous. Just as in real life, however, there is no one best way to approach a problem, so with the case study. To address this problem, we plan to prepare and expect the evaluators chosen to act as "connaiseurs", to use Eisner's (1992) term - experts who know how to identify and frame issues, understand problems in depth and leave room for a variety of options.

Another limitation we face in this methodology, in addition to the individual evaluator's subjective opinion, is the lack of interrater agreement. Since two readers will review the responses of each student, we will inevitably find differences in evaluation. On balance, however, this method is preferable to one rater who may be unfairly lenient or harsh. The experts also will need to keep in mind that the long-range objective of this part of the study is to measure growth, not to compare one student/manager with another; each student will enter the program with differing levels of experience and knowledge.

Circulation of the Part III questions to be used by the interviewers raised an issue that the FORUM Advisory Board will need to address but did not address in any detail during the planning and that is "What type of responses do we anticipate and how would they change the current program?"

Inherent in interviews are special pitfalls we will have to face including the difficulty of coding, analyzing and interpreting data; the small number of respondents; the difficulty of getting representative samples of the population under study; the subjectivity of the interviews. Such questions as "To what extent do you [the employer] share the goals of the program?" or "Do you feel that your goals are being met by the program?" do not provide a standard against which to measure and present problems in collating and interpreting the data.

Much has been written about the value of longitudinal studies. Plans to assess in-coming students when they graduate will provide us with a possible measurement of growth. Without going beyond this time frame, however, we will be unable to assess retention or applicability on the job.

NEXT STEPS

Implementation of the various parts of the study will bring us data. The quantitative data will be entered on to SPSS. The challenging next step will be to turn that data into useful information. Members of the FORUM Advisory Board will be faced with the interpretation of mounts of data, many of which will be complex and hard to interpret properly. Interpretation of

assessment information will also undoubtedly raise issues which will force the FORUM Advisory Board members to review the program's mission and focus Board goals.

The ultimate step, of course, is to move from information to improvement. What will we learn from this survey and how will we use that information to make appropriate changes in instruction, support and marketing? Much work must be done before that question can be answered.

Empire State College's FORUM program has the good fortune to be guided by an advisory board made up of people of good will. They are individuals who can accept the limitations of research and not get trapped by the "perfect data" fallacy". (Banta, 1988, p. 20) They also are people who will accept initial analysis of the data but also probe for additional ways to understand the complex input. And, finally, they will listen to the input from the graduates and sponsors and be open to changes suggested by such information. This is a survey that will not lie yellowing on the shelf.

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Choice and Consequence in the Assessment of Adult Learning Outcomes

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Introduction

The call for educational accountability has placed a premium on the assessment of learning outcomes. Whether in response to a legislative mandate, a public cry for accountability, or an internal call for curriculum reform, the ubiquitous assessment movement has touched almost every aspect of our educational programs. Accreditors, ever faithful to modern trends, have embraced the notion of value-added and insisted on assessment; causing a good number of us to measure whatever we can and show we have made good on the promises that appear in our mission statements and general education requirements.

This paper will not suggest the popular push to assess is misguided, wrong-headed or misdirected, nor will the paper say that measurement of such outcomes might supplant excellence with mediocrity or substitute the substantive with the trivial - though these notions, we'll admit, have occurred to us. Instead, we will attempt to offer a primer for the unacquainted and a plainly worded discussion of some of the central issues affecting the assessment of learning outcomes. We will examine the choices we must make when constructing assessment programs for our colleges and universities and we will consider the consequences of these choices–what they cost in terms of manpower and effort, what benefits they may reap, and what trade-offs are inevitably encountered. We will illustrate our discussion with examples of the Capital University Assessment Program, now in its eighth year, showing our choices and their consequences, telling what we've done right, but showing our mistakes, too–the times our own assessment efforts were wasteful or misdirected. And through our discussion, we hope to demonstrate how the adoption of an institutional assessment plan becomes an evolving process, characterized by false starts, faltered steps, misguided directions, and finally small successes, that can ultimately affect the educational climate of an institution.

Assessment at Capital

Capital University unwittingly decided to embrace the assessment movement in 1987 with the adoption of a new competency-based general education core-the result of a two year discussion on curriculum reform. The choice was unwitting in only one sense; we were unaware how difficult it would be to accurately measure all that we promised to instill in our students. Not only

did we decide to assess the effects of our new curriculum, but we decided to hurry and to measure whatever we could right away. An Assessment Center was created, staffed, and charged with developing a suitable program for institutional assessment. At the same time, faculty groups responsible for revising the core were reassembled and charged with developing assessment strategies that would correspond to each objective of the new general education requirements. Within a year, variables were selected to measure three categories in which change could be expected: (1) academic proficiency (The Academic Profile), (2) learning style (Canfield Learning Style Inventory) and (3) personality (Jackson Personality Inventory). Our approach was longitudinal, pre-tests on admission and post-tests near graduation. By measuring value-added educational change within the three domains, we confidently looked forward to showing, at least on a broad level, the effect of our curriculum.

Our decision to adopt a battery of outcome measures, however, raised a new set of considerations about the choices we made. While we felt confident about using standardized, nationally normed instruments, we were also cognizant of a strong case for developing institutionally specific, home-grown, instruments. The advantages of the standardized instruments were obviously formidable: ready availability; established validity and reliability; credibility across a wide range of forums; and the ability to compare local results with national norms. On the other hand, home-grown instruments were much less expensive to administer and score, and the results could be readily tailored to pertinent questions on campus; increasing the likelihood of faculty and administrative ownership.

Another consideration we had to face was whether our measures of learning outcomes would be valid or whether they were measuring what we intended. In the case of Capital's assessment battery (the broad domains of academic proficiency, learning style and personality), many of the questions about validity were answered in the testing manual for each instrument, but the local significance of the results-their local validity-remained problematic in that we could never be sure what particular treatment effect produced the change on a variable, nor could we be certain that these well-validated variables had much to do with the constructs discussed by faculty who had envisioned the new core curriculum. This disadvantage was underscored by a North Central accreditation visit in the early years of our assessment program. Accreditors recognized a comprehensive program for assessment was firmly in place, but complained that the mechanism for relating assessment results to classroom practice was ineffectual.

We hoped that faculty-developed assessment of specific core course objectives would more precisely establish the particular treatment effects of our general education requirements, and that through a series of correlative studies we might buttress the local validity of our nationally normed measures. The faculty-developed assessment strategies were fraught with their own set of problems. Some learning outcomes just seemed to defy measurement, while others yielded familiar methods that seemed to embody what had been wrong with the "old" general education requirements, e.g., a reliance on content with little attention to higher-order thinking. Notwithstanding these problems, some innovative assessment strategies emerged to build a valid, albeit shaky, foundation to our assessment model.

A more qualitative measure, The Student Survey, was added to the battery to assess student attitudes and opinions, and provide corroboration for the more quantitatively based measures. This survey instrument was intended to be used with entering and graduating students in both the adult and traditional programs. Open-ended questions elicited anecdotal responses about life on campus and student perceptions of the core. Semi-structured questions provided quantifiable data on the qualitative dimensions of the campus climate. While The Student Survey was an important addition to the Battery, ironically it raised issues associated with most qualitative measures. One of the more obvious concerns was that the information from the open-ended responses had to be condensed and organized in an arbitrary fashion for reporting purposes, leading inevitably to a partial loss of the original data. Also the anonymous nature of the survey, a feature that was intended to guarantee honest responses, eliminated the possibility of matching or integrating the qualitative data directly with the quantitative data. Similarly, the anonymity made it difficult to verify that a representative sample, and not an extreme group of students, completed the survey.

In an effort to bridge the gap between the often course specific, faculty-developed measures of general education outcomes and the nationally normed quantitative measures of academic proficiency, learning style and personality, the Core Assessment Inventory was developed. This measure was intended to evaluate learning in general education, reveal some of the commonalities among the new curriculum, and pave the way for further discussions on alternative mechanisms by which students could fulfill core requirements. Pooled questions from faculty responsible for each general education requirement yielded an instrument that could be electronically scored and then analyzed by course and item, controlling for students who had actually taken the course. While the Core Assessment Inventory promised to be

a valuable addition to our assessment program, it also exhibited a difficulty commonly associated with home grown assessment instruments. That is, there was no valid way of determining what the results really meant since they could not be compared to national norms or even to the means scores of previous administrations. Without an empirical basis for comparison, it would also be hard to determine whether the questions were too difficult or whether the entire measure was sufficiently valid. Fortunately, after several administrations and comparisons with different samples of students, the Core Assessment Inventory eventually justified the effort needed to develop it.

As soon as we thought all of the strengths and weaknesses of our assessment program had been duly considered, we soon found that there were unplanned benefits from using the assessment battery; applications that did not address institutional accountability but still served as an impetus for program revision. One of the first of these unexpected benefits stemmed directly from a routine inquiry into the reliability of instruments in the assessment battery for our particular population of students. The intent of the inquiry was to compare published reliability coefficients with results obtained from several administrations of the battery. Since a large amount of information was generated from these administrations and stored in electronic data bases, we wanted to make sure the students realized some benefit from their participation. Individualized reports on academic proficiency and learning style were created from the data and sent to the students and their advisors. In a short period of time, these assessment results became an important component of academic advising, allowing advisors to better counsel students on effective adaptation to college. Group profiles of incoming students were also created from the data and eventually served as a source for discussion about learning style, student expectation, and eventually, faculty styles of teaching. A series of comparisons between profiles of traditional and adult learners heightened debate over pedagogical differences between the two programs, leading to a broader recognition of experiential learning and independent studies by traditional faculty, and a wider acceptance of non-traditional teaching methods throughout the campus.

Just as there were unplanned benefits, there also were unplanned problems. We were first confronted with the problem of defining student samples from the beginning of the assessment program when we set out to administer the battery to all incoming students. Traditional students were given the battery during orientation, though it took a full year to track down students who missed the initial administration. Similarly, the effort to recruit volunteers to take the post-test portion of the Battery as

they neared graduation yielded only a small percentage of the population. In the Adult Degree Program, our attempts to define student samples met unique problems. Adult students frequently did not enter or matriculate as a class, which made administration logistically complex, and since most adult learners bring substantial transfer credit and continue in significant life roles outside the university while they are students, the treatment effect of the curriculum became even more difficult to gauge. We also found from our experiences with both programs that if student participation in assessment was optional, the resulting sample was unlikely to represent the student body. Enticements to participate could readily make matters worse by permitting even greater self-selection. On the other hand, after faculty adopted a principle of mandatory compliance, we learned that forced participation had its own set of problems. Students were still reluctant and sometimes unwilling to attend the assessment sessions, raising the administrative dilemma of deciding what to do with outright refusals. In addition, many of the students who participated, did so with surly or capricious attitudes. Hurriedly completed, incomplete, or otherwise suspicious answer sheets tended to indicate that these students were not well motivated to do their best; a notion strengthened by the findings that a class of students at Capital demonstrated lower levels of academically proficiency as graduating seniors than as entering freshmen.

After wrestling with the general problems of measurement and evaluation, as well as the more specific problem of student motivation, we began to suspect that the ultimate solution would be to establish a campus climate for assessment. At Capital, like at other schools, assessment has received strong support from the administration; both in top-down encouragement to establish accountability, and financial resources for assessment activities. There has even been broad faculty involvement to measure student learning outcomes. But despite the commitment of administration and faculty, there remains a vacuum into which our assessment results are released; a condition or climate that those of us most responsible for assuring the benefits of assessment find disquieting. Studies are published, discussion groups formed, faculty retreats planned, but little is done to make use of the results. Sometimes it seems as though no one cares and the ultimate solution of a campus climate for assessment is always just out of reach. In the final section of the paper, we consider a few of the reasons why this might be the case.

Concluding Remarks

Assessment is not a neutral activity, and like Willis (1993), we believe any program of assessment, any type of test, or any form of reporting reflects a number of assumptions about the

nature of learning. To the extent that these assumptions match the corresponding rhetoric of curriculum reform, assessment may provide meaningful information about pedagogical experiments, but too often the ideas that shape new programs are independent of the measurement that is asked to evaluate their effectiveness. Objectives, such as lifelong learning or higher-order thought, are, in the words of Willis, "unlikely to be achieved unless the accompanying assessment reflects the same theoretical principles (p. 383)." Fortunately, new educational theory already is fixed on the horizon (e.g., situated-cognition) and new methods are underway which permit measurement of the underlying constructs (e.g., the phenomenographic approach). The danger lies in the rush to assess. We scramble to prove that our programs deliver on their promises, but in our hurry to appease all the various constituencies, we short-change the development of new educational philosophies and revert to assessment strategies that only recycle existing educational tests. No wonder our assessment results are often irrelevant to the very questions that began our curriculum reform.

Like Gerald Graff (1994), in his provocatively entitled essay, Curricular Reform Blues, we believe most benefits of the assessment movement have taken place as a result of process rather than product, and unfortunately, the benefit often is lost when the product finally is adopted. Graff calls this the First Law of Curricular Reform: *The debates generated by the process of program review tend to be better than any curricular result they produce.* Put another way, the talk of assessment-our contested issues, methods, beliefs and values-often is the best product, but once we put a new program in place, the dialogue ends. According to Graff, we should "incorporate into the curriculum that community of debate and self-reflection that is generated by the assessment process....(p. 25)," a discourse that does not describe a future outcome (what should change), but rather a conversation that is performed (a meeting ground for contested issues). Such discussions would promote consensus-consensus on what issues should be discussed rather than on whatever conclusions should result from the discussion. Too often we've reached consensus on conclusions, on what ought to be taught and measured, then set aside the conversation in order to pursue its assessment.

New ideas require new assessment strategies, but too often we have found that both administrative and faculty dialogue virtually grind to a halt once new instructional goals have been announced. At this point, faculty return to their classrooms, experiment with teaching methods, launch new instructional initiatives, and devise innovative assignments, but the fundamen-

tal questions of assessment are set aside. Similarly, administrators rest easier and move on to other pressing matters, feeling that the issue of insuring educational quality for their institution has somehow been left in good hands. Until we find a way to continue both the dialogue and the process at each of our institutions, be it through innovative leadership or bureaucratic fiat, the realization of an improved campus climate and the ultimate solution to the practical problems of assessment, will remain illusive.

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Prior Experiential Learning Assessment: Loosening the Grip of the Course-Equivalency Model

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During the 1992-93 academic year, administrators and faculty of the Division of General Studies at St. Joseph's College undertook an extensive evaluation of its Prior Experiential Learning Assessment Program. As part of this effort, the participants endeavored to get back to first principles by reviewing and modifying the program at St. Joseph's College in light of the literature and practices at other institutions.

From its inception in 1974, the Division of General Studies has operated on the assumption that the college-level experiential learning of adults is an asset that can be translated into academic credit which can be applied toward completing the requirements of the baccalaureate.

The health and management degree programs of the Division have been designed with this in mind, as has its Prior Experiential Learning Assessment (P.E.L.A.) Program. Regarding P.E.L.A. credit, the Division developed its policies in order to insure a proper curricular balance between theoretical and experiential learning—in keeping with CAEL's standard that "credit should be awarded for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application" (Whitaker, 1989, p. xvi).

Endeavoring to establish this balance, the Division has drawn on the work of theorists who have made the case for the role of experience in education. To this point, Morris Keeton (1976) has written: "It has long been recognized that knowledge without experiential content is not truly knowledge" (p. 2).

David Kolb's (1981) seminal experiential learning model artfully depicts the dynamic interplay between theoretical concepts and concrete experience. He shows that conceptual, theoretical learning is but a part of a whole that should also include experiences which permit observation, reflection, and testing of those concepts. This more holistic approach he has referred to as "integrative education" (p. 252), a term which aptly describes the intent of the Division's P.E.L.A. Program.

There are different methods used by institutions in order to balance theory and practical applications in the assessment of experiential learning. One is to focus on individual courses, making sure to strike a proper balance within each course, separately. Another approach—the one adopted by St. Joseph's—is to insure that the balance is evident in the context of the student's degree program. Concerning this, Urban Whitaker (1989) in As-

sessing Learning: Standards, Principles, and Procedures, published by CAEL, states: "It is appropriate to grant credit for either component [theory or applied learning] if the other has been, or will be, completed as an integral part of the learning plan" (p. 99).

The approach St. Joseph's has adopted is also in line with Assessing Learning: A CAEL Handbook for Faculty which, on the topic of the course-equivalency issue, concludes: "In summary, there is apparently no best model, but the different models fit different types of learning, different kinds of students, and different institutions" (Cabell and Hickerson, 1988, p. 147). The reason the Division adopted the broader approach relates directly to the concern articulated by Whitaker (1989) in the following: "The most common violation in the assessment of experiential learning is to grant credit for practical competence disregarding theoretical knowledge that may be essential to properly balanced learning" (p. 99).

It was precisely out of respect for the value of traditional coursework and the recognition of the unique capacity of the classroom experience for communicating a body of knowledge that the Division decided to avoid binding itself to the course-equivalency model. The P.E.L.A. Program—with its attendant portfolio development seminar—is, therefore, not typically used to validate course-equivalency credit. Rather, when students at St. Joseph's want to demonstrate their prior learning that directly corresponds to the College's courses, the students are directed to standardized proficiency examinations offered by CLEP, Regents College, USAFI-Dantes, Thomas Edison College, and New York University Foreign Language Department.

The decision to depart from reliance on the course-equivalency approach at St. Joseph's was made with cognizance of the views of many academicians who prefer the more traditional method of matching experiential learning to an acknowledged body of knowledge imparted in an established course. (See McCormick, 1993, and Hickerson, 1993.)

A striking counterpoint to the course-equivalency convention appeared in the Summer 1994 CAEL Forum and News. In a thoughtful and spirited piece, Jackson Kytle and Erik Zencey make their case:

> Philosophically, course-based assessment is problematic because it forces student experience and student ideas into faculty-defined containers that may or may not be appropriate to the learning as it was experienced....Mentors and students work hard to squeeze the student's experiential learning into the conventions of course-based evaluation, impressing themselves with how difficult—and therefore how worthwhile educationally—the squeezing is. But the more thoughtful among them are often stricken by the sterility of the task.

> It is not far from there to this subversive thought: What does all this effort have to do with learning? (p. 7)

In deciding for an experiential learning component free from the constraints of the course equivalency model, St. Joseph's took note of the long-standing higher educational tradition of offering traditional-aged students practicums, internships, and cooperative educational experiences. For example, it is not unusual for a business student to take courses in management and then go on to do internships in the same area, receiving credit for these different but related educational experiences.

The rationale for the practice of granting college credit for field experience education is based on the learning that is associated with students being afforded the opportunity—depending upon the specific context—to do one or more of the following:

1. Advance skills and experience related to a specific career.
2. Examine institutional cultures in light of theoretical notions in a chosen field.
3. Put theory into practice so as to gain skills in a profession.
4. Work for social change either through community organizing, political activity, research/action projects, or work with organizations seeking to bring about change in the social order.
5. Become involved in another culture with the intention, as a participant observer, of learning as much as possible about that culture. (Adapted from Duley, 1981, pp. 600-601)

For adults, the timing of their learning is oftentimes reversed from that of traditional students. Adults usually come to college already in possession of experiential learning. Their task, then, is to have this learning validated. At St. Joseph's, this is accomplished by their participating in the P.E.L.A. Program, wherein students petitioning for academic credit through portfolio development are faced with the challenge of evidencing this learning in such a way as to justify the awarding of college credit.

To better understand the nature of this challenge, it is useful to return to the insights of learning theorists. James S. Coleman (1976) in "Differences Between Experiential and Classroom Learning" contrasts the experiential learning process with the information assimilation process. Most academic learning is concerned with receiving, assimilating, and organizing information, usually in the form of general principles. Following this, students infer particular applications from the general principle and, finally, move from "the cognitive and symbol processing sphere to the sphere of action." Only when the knowledge is actually applied can the learning be considered complete (pp. 50-51). Viewing the traditional college experience in light of this model provides the justification for the awarding of credit for field experience education.

Alternatively, the experiential learning process, according to Coleman (1976), "proceeds in almost a reverse sequence." It begins with carrying out actions in particular instances, observing and understanding the cause and effect relationships of actions and consequences, and, from there, moving to the formation and application of the general principles to other situations (pp. 81-82). Here can be seen the explanation for the awarding of credit for prior experiential learning.

Adults preparing portfolios would most often, then, focus on the interrelationship between their experiential learning and the appropriate knowledge base and/or theoretical foundation that is associated with (although not typically identical to) college coursework.

To borrow from Kolb (1981) on this, adult students may: 1) report and reflect on their experiences from different theoretical perspectives; 2) evaluate theories/knowledge/methodologies in light of their experiences; 3) create concepts that integrate their experiences into previously existing or original logically sound theories; and/or 4) show applications of theory in decision making and problem solving (p. 236). Recent writing on this topic suggests additional dimensions that adult students may wish to address in their portfolios. Barry Sheckley and Morris Keeton (1994), in noting the "valuable educational process" of assessing prior learning, suggest that students may: 5) "reflectively judge the learning they derived from the experience"; and 6) "come to understand how their learnings grew over years of experience" as their initial concepts were "adapted...through reflective action"—a process of "critically thinking about how to improve an action while engaged in that action" (p. 10).

A more challenging point that students may wish to address is suggested by Jack Mezirow. In Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood (1990), he writes, "By far the most significant learning experiences in adulthood involve critical self-reflection—reassessing the way we have posed problems and reassessing our own orientation to perceiving, knowing, believing, feeling, and acting" (p. 13).

This level of self-reflection may lead students to what Mezirow (1981) has described as the "emancipatory process" of "perspective transformation," wherein we become:

> critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings. (p. 6)

Achieving this level of self-reflection is a far cry from the routine matching of a student's experience with course content. It

also highlights the educational value of the portfolio development seminar and the important role the P.E.L.A. mentor plays in encouraging this learning process. Concerning this, Kytle and Zency (1994) have written:

> Perhaps the most critical and underappreciated dynamic in the process by which this learning is created *is the active reflecting upon experience in the present moment with another person, the prior learning assessment professional, who draws upon* [his/her] *experience and learning in order to prod, poke, suggest, educe, and guide the student.* This dynamic creation of knowledge necessarily involves the interplay of the past experiences and learning of both persons. To call experiential learning "prior" learning is to suggest that knowledge has been delivered to the student's present, whole and entire in one tidy lump, from the student's past. It deflects attention away from the roots of this (and all) knowledge in a social, dialogical interplay, in an intrinsically constructive and creative examination of the student's experience. (p. 9)

Having argued for the value of freeing ourselves from the constraints of the course-equivalency model, it should be stated that there are times at St. Joseph's when it is used, typically when the prior learning is more applied. In these instances, the College is guided by Whitaker's (1989) three points that should be considered in determining the "college-level" worthiness of such experiential learning:

> a) that the learning imply a conceptual as well as practical grasp of the knowledge or competence acquired; b) that the learning be applicable outside the specific context in which it was acquired; and c) that the learning fall within the domain usually considered appropriate for postsecondary credit as opposed to secondary or continuing education for non-credit purposes. (p. 50)

Thus, when students earn experiential credit for highly applied learning (e.g., computerapplications or crafts), they may not receive credit for the corresponding coursework.

In summary, the Division of General Studies at St. Joseph's College affirms the importance of theoretical and experiential learning. By employing a "mixed-model," it draws on different approaches in order to: insure that students have acquired all the knowledge associated with the content of traditional coursework; provide the opportunity for students to receive additional credit for the distinct learning that is associated with the experiential domain; and preserve the integrity of the degree by awarding prior experiential credit only for college-level learning and in such a way that students' programs reflect an appropriate balance between theory and practical application.

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DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance Learning and the Reconceptualization of Education for Adults

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The rate of change that we are experiencing in our lives is unprecedented: work is being redefined; workplaces are changing dramatically; we have a global economy that is ferociously competitive; technological breakthroughs are occurring with increasing rapidity. In the meantime, much of higher education is locked into a 19th century paradigm rooted in the needs of an industrial era and it resists the opportunities presented by recent advances in computer and telecommunications technology. If we are going to meet effectively the challenges of the 21st century, we must reconceptualize what we mean my education and learning. This is particularly true of adult learning.

In a recent article Peter Drucker (1995) points out that by the end of this century, knowledge workers will make up one third of the U.S. workforce and we will have moved closer to being a knowledge society. In such a society, he argues, it is not land, labor and capital (the old trinity of economic development) that will be the comparative advantage among nations, but rather the application of knowledge. We will not speak of rich nations and poor nations, rather, smart nations and ignorant nations.

To talk of a knowledge society has to lead one to think about learning. If we are becoming a knowledge society, as Drucker claims, then clearly learning has to be at the center that society. But what type of learning? "In the knowledge society," writes Drucker, "more and more knowledge, and especially advanced knowledge, will be required well past the age of formal schooling and increasingly, perhaps, through educational processes that do not center on the traditional school" (p. 66). We will have to redefine what we mean by an educated person. "Traditionally," says Drucker, "an educated person was somebody who had a prescribed stock of formal knowledge..... Increasingly, an educated person will be somebody who has learned how to learn, and who continues learning...throughout his or her lifetime.... Learning will become the tool of the individual—available to him or her at any age—if only because so much skill and knowledge can be acquired by means of the new learning technologies" (pp. 66-67).

In this last statement, Drucker makes several key points: learning will be continuous; it will be the tool of the individual, and new learning technologies will play an important role. These are key elements in the reconceptualization of education and are integral to the development of the learning process of the future.

Education cannot and will not end at 18 or 21 years of age. Lifelong learning for adults is a necessity, but not education as it is presently organized—with its time and place bias. Today's and tomorrow's workers need an educational system that is far more responsive to their changing lifestyles and to the demands of a changing workplace.

Charles Handy (1990) argues that "work has changed its meaning and its pattern... Our whole way of life is changed, sometimes upsides down" (p. 171). The workplace of the future is going to demand people who possess initiative, flexibility, creativity, global mindedness and who are information/technology literate. Jobs will no longer be secure; career paths will not be well defined; towing the company line will be passe.

In this changing environment, neither private enterprise nor the educational system are adequately preparing workers for this new workplace; workers are simply not performing to their potential. For Handy (1990), education, in this changed world of work, is an essential investment and so rationing it as we do is absurd. Equally absurd, he argues, is "to try to shove it all at the beginning of life, or think that it can all happen in classrooms...or to think that brain skills are the only skills that matter.... A new world of work requires upside-down thinking in education" (p. 172). Education, he argues, simply has to be reinvented.

These views on the shortcomings of educational systems are shared by Robert Reich (1991). By the middle of this century, points out Reich, America's schools closely mirrored the country's system of mass production. "Children moved from grade to grade through a preplanned sequence of standard subjects, as if on a factory conveyor belt" (pp. 59-60). Reich goes on to state that:

> Rather than construct meanings for themselves, meanings are imposed upon them. What is to be learned is prepackaged into lesson plans, lectures and textbooks. Reality has already been simplified; the obedient student only has to commit it to memory. An efficient educational process, it is assumed, imparts knowledge much as an efficient factory installs parts on an assembly line (pp. 229-30).

Reich does not believe that such a system will meet the changing needs of the United States. It will not be sufficient to master old domains of knowledge. "What is much more valuable is the capacity to effectively and creatively use the knowledge" (p. 182).

In a stinging indictment of America's public schools, Edward Fiske (1991) writes that we in the U.S. "are trying to use a nineteenth century institution to prepare young people for life in the twenty-first century" (p. 14). He goes on to state that we "have been asking schools to prepare students—all students—for de-

manding, fast-changing jobs of the future with rigid structures and teaching methods designed for the factories of the early industrial era" (p. 25). James Appleberry (1994), in a speech delivered at the First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning held in Rome, commented: "We can no longer prepare our students by using a linear educational system when they will experience a random access informational environment" (p.5).

If we are going to assist working adults adapt to an ever-changing society, we must reconceptualize what we mean by education/learning. We need a new paradigm that moves us away from the dominant notion that learning can only take place in a classroom with a teacher at the front of that classroom. "For Americans today," writes sociologist Robert Bellah (1991), "education means, above all, schools and we have elevated schools into something like a secular religion" (p.146). In a seminal work, Ivan Illich (1970) called for the deschooling of society. He argues that a "major illusion on which the school system rests is that most learning is the result of teaching" (p. 12).

To develop a new paradigm, to reconceptualize education means that we have to rethink the teacher-centeredness of the current paradigm and the dominance of the school with its classrooms. Carol Twigg (1994) argues that in our current system students have to be taught what they need to know for a lifetime career. She calls this outmoded delivery system the "teaching infrastructure" (p. 18). At the heart of this infrastructure, with its extensive physical plant, is the assumption students have to travel to the campus in order to be taught. But can anyone really argue that students have to go to a campus in order to learn?

Under the dominant paradigm, faculty convenience dominates. Students have to come to them so that they can learn what the faculty has to teach. This creates a built-in place and time bias into institutionalized learning—where and when teaching and learning occurs. This has also resulted in a number of structural biases: an academic year is two semesters; courses meet for 50 minutes; so many credit hours equal a degree. This teaching model, states Twigg, "based on industrial age concepts, cannot offer a high quality learning experience.... This one-size-fits all model may have been appropriate to a homogeneous student population mastering a relatively standardized curriculum, but it conflicts with what we now know about the nature of learning. By their very nature, courses simply cannot respond to individualized learning issues" (p. 19).

For many young students, these time, place and structural biases often are not a problem. It is a quite different story for the working adult. Time and place pose major barriers for many adult learners in today's society. When continuing education

was, for the most part restricted to casual learners interested in personal enrichment, these barriers were not serious problems. Those days are gone. Lifelong learning is now a necessity. Continuous learning is mandated by the fast pace of change in our personal and professional lives.

In its formal announcement of the First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning in Rome (1994), the European Lifelong Learning Initiative provided a definition of lifelong learning as "the development of human potential through a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in their roles, circumstances and environments."

UNESCO talks about men and women as the agents of their own education and that much of the future educational potential will be developed outside of the existing educational system. UNESCO foresees the development of a new paradigm for education. But, what would such a new paradigm look like? How might the learning process of the future be described?

James Ogilvy (1993), a futurist who is part of the Global Business Network, describes what he sees as the new paradigm:

> Higher education is no longer an extension of secondary education. It no longer consists in the caging of adolescents in classrooms where professors share arcane knowledge about the increasingly specialized subjects of their research. Instead, the model is one of team teaching and team learning by responsible adults who won't waste time or money on ineffective communicators (p. 60).

Twigg's (1994) new paradigm involves the creation of a national learning infrastructure that "will support an information age pedagogical model in which learning can occur anytime, anyplace and anywhere. Institutions will operate year-round; semesters and fixed class meetings will be a distant memory." We will determine, through individualized assessment, "what students already know and how they learn best.... Learning materials will not be course-based, but, rather, will be modularized to respond to individual learning needs and preferences" (p. 19).

In the new paradigm, it will not be enough just to break the stranglehold of the time and place bias. We must also examine more carefully what we mean by learning and determine how we are going to put the learner back in control of the learning process. Research on learning until most recently has been dominated by behaviorism and by the view that knowledge is quantitative. More recently, some researchers have taken issue with these two assumptions and have argued that learning is a quali-

tative transformation of understandings rather than a quantitative accretion. Learners are, in turn, viewed as actively construing and making meaning. UNESCO has argued that "if a learning society is to be effective, the opportunities must be accepted and utilized by its citizens. Only autonomous learners can take maximum advantage of such an opportunity so the evolution of a learning society depends on the development of autonomous learning" (quoted in Candy, 1991, pp. 77-78).

Active construers and makers of meaning. Autonomous learners. Self-directed, self-managed learners. Many an author has argued that the rapid pace of change today demands individuals who are capable of independent action. As Philip Candy (1991) points out, the "development of self-directed individuals —that is people who exhibit the qualities of moral, emotional and intellectual autonomy—is the long-term goal of most, if not all, educational endeavors" (p. 19). But, he argues, it is important to differentiate between the four distinct aspects of self-direction: as a personal attribute (personal autonomy); as the willingness and ability to conduct one's own education (self-management); as a way of organizing learning in a formal setting (learner control); and as individual, non-institutional pursuit of learning (autodidaxy), (p. 23). For purposes of this discussion, the focus is on the learner-control dimension of self-directed learning.

Shifting teacher-control to learner control is not, however, a simple matter. As Candy points out: "If implemented fully, learner control represents a fundamental shift in the balance of power and locus of control and leads inevitably toward a radically altered role for both the learner and the teacher" (p. 210). And why make this shift? Candy maintains that "there is evidence that self-direction can enhance learning outcomes, improve the relevance and meaningfulness of what is learned, and give people a sense of personal potency or power that is basic to the development of a learning-oriented society" (pp. 417-18). Lastly, he makes the point that self-direction "embodies two of education's most noble aims and most enduring mandates: individual fulfillment and societal transformation" (p. 25).

Lifelong learning and self-directed learning are two essential dimensions of the learning process of the future. There is a third dimension: Distance learning or what I prefer to call networked learning. The Delors Commission (1994) provided this definition of distance learning:

> Dealing with the parent concepts of distance education, open and flexible learning and related issues, one is led to a teaching/learning methodology that is based on the capacity of individuals to increase their autonomy as compared to the one in a conventional classroom, through

their independent access to suitable learning materials, possibly presented in multimedia format. This is called distance learning (p. 7).

Note the stress on learner autonomy and independent access to learning resources. There is increasing recognition that new technologies are opening up entirely new vistas both for self-directed learning and for learning at a distance.

Distance education is clearly a topic that is on the minds of many people around the world. As countries and ministries of education seek less costly ways to provide learning opportunities to their citizens, there is greater attention focused on the potential savings that could result from distance learning programs that do not require heavy investment in physical plant and, at least in theory, human resources. Advances in computer and telecommunications technology are making it possible for educators and policy makers to think about entirely new educational delivery systems.

As I read more and more about the application of technology to education, I am, however, becoming increasing concerned that what we are seeing is old wine being put into new bottles. In the U.S. at least, there is a rush among some of our academic institutions to embrace the new technologies: satellite broadcast, two way video, multimedia presentations, etc. Too often, however, these new technologies are being used to transmit an old pedagogy, that is a teacher-dominated curriculum. Little thought is being given to how the new technologies can actually enhance a learner-centered program. Rather, we actually hear references to the electronic classroom or the virtual classroom and university. The goal is to create electronically what usually takes place in the traditional college classroom. The opportunity to reconceptualize education that is being afforded by the new technologies is, in many instances, being missed.

In the field of distance education we also see the continuing dominance of the instructional designers whose behaviorist view of knowledge and learning produces the prepackaged, predigested educational programs offered by the open universities. New technologies are being used to enhance the delivery of educational programs that continue the subordination of the individual learner to the teaching package, rather than empowering the student to participate actively in the design and execution of his/her own learning plan.

Clearly, the development of information superhighways makes access to massive amounts of information possible by virtually anyone, anyplace, anytime. Tools for accessing, displaying, creating and evaluating information give us the opportunity to transform the very nature of the learning process. This can and should

mean putting the learner back in the center of the learning process and redefining the role of the teacher from that of expert to that of resources guide and mentor. It also makes possible the removal of the "burdensome and cumbersome apparatus of teaching from the natural disposition to learn" (Candy, p. 53).

As noted earlier, there is a danger that educators will become too enamored with the new technologies and, thereby, lose perspective. At the same time, the new technologies bring two potentially significant benefits: access to incredible amounts of information and connectivity between people separated by time and space. The new technologies make it possible to redefine the meaning of time and space in a learning context. This has major implications for adult and distance learning. But these gains will be lost, in my judgement, if we simply use the technologies to move classroom-based curricula over fiber optic cable.

Computer-mediated telecommunications opens up new vistas for educators. Tiffin and Rajasingham (1995) point out that most attempts at distance learning: correspondence, educational television, computer-mediated instruction sought to emulate traditional classroom methods of instruction. Telelearning, however, is emerging as a different way of learning. "It empowers the learner...and creates new social patterns for learning from others" (p. 124). We can meaningfully talk about interactive, collaborative networks of learners who are separated by great distances and who are not constrained by time or space. Networked learning clearly presents us with the opportunity to reconceptualize education and learning for the adult learner. This is an opportunity that we should not let slip by.

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Interactive Television: An Adventure in Graduate Education

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The Graduate Education Department of Ashland University was investigating the possibility of offering a program of distance learning courses through interactive television. Ashland's graduate program is built partially on the concept of taking the program to where the students are located and offering regular graduate school experiences. Interactive television seemed the next logical step in this plan. This also seemed to be a logical next step since, even though there was no on-campus television facility, several high schools in Ohio are being set up with interactive television through fiber optics, Ashland University was able to offer courses by tapping into these networks. Graduate education courses can be offered for teachers without their having to leave their school districts. This is an important issue in some of the more remote parts of the state.

I was asked to teach, through this medium, a class I ordinarily teach on campus. This core course is Contemporary Issues in Education. Since distance learning by interactive television is again becoming an issue in education, this seemed an opportunity to incorporate another actual experience in my class. After some consideration I agreed to teach the course. If, after thirty five years in education with only the last three back in the graduate classroom, this could become a successful venture, then practically any other confirmed low - tech educator could be successful as well. It would be an adventure.

The remainder of this article is about that adventure. If this was going to be a definitive experience there should be documentation, so I began a journal which chronicled what went on in each class. The focus of this journal was two-fold: first, the classroom experiences and their degree of success; second, my personal thoughts and feelings as I ventured into what I anticipated as being quite a foreign experience.

The Adventure The first step was to review the literature. The assistance gained was limited, but my confidence was raised as it became clear that what is effective in interactive television is basically what is good technique in the classroom. Another concern was that there are many ways distance learning is carried out and, each has its own advantages and disadvantages, techniques and problems. Looking at studies which focus on teaching strategies, I kept thinking "I do that" or "that' s only good

teaching." The literature did not offer me any new insights but did serve to reassure me that I could do it.

A drawback for Ashland University was that since we had no classroom of our own to use for interactive television we had to use someone else's equipment. The county from where we broadcasted was very supportive and helped in many ways to make it a positive experience. During that time we were using someone else's design which in some ways is not suited to graduate education courses, but we were able to adjust.

The Set Up

Visiting the site which would be my home base was my first indication that this was going to be more difficult than my campus based classes.

Some interactive TV classes are originated from a classroom/studio with cameraman, soundman and other necessary technicians. In this situation all controls were operated by the teacher and many were pre-set.

There was a stack console on one side with a VCR recorder, a VCR player and a laser disc player. On top of the desk were four small monitors, each tuned to one of the participating sites.

To the teacher's right was an ELMO. An ELMO is like an electronic overhead projector that transmits pictures through television monitors. One can transmit images of slides, transparencies, opaque pictures or actual objects. It is a great teaching tool. In addition, an auxiliary input allows transmission of computer programs and visuals. On the other side of the room was a fax/copier with access to all the sites.

The cameras were in the ceiling; one aimed at the class and one at the teacher. A control panel at the teacher's station controlled the cameras. There was some anxiety generated when I realized I was expected to teach, conduct good class interaction, follow my notes, be interesting and run the control room at the same time. It was amazing and terrifying simultaneously. How many balls could we keep in the air without dropping one?

At the first class session I found that I had 17 students at three sites. None of them had ever been involved in an interactive TV class before, either as a teacher or as a student. Everyone of them had grown up with commercial television as part of their daily life. How was I going to be compared? Would I fare well with Dan Rather and Peter Jennings?

The first few classes were somewhat awkward, with both the teacher and the students getting used to the new medium. One of the first big problems was the lack of interaction among the students.

They would interact with other students at their own site but

seldom between sites. In conjunction with this I was having a hard time getting them to answer questions. These were major difficulties because this was a class on Contemporary Issues in Education, and a large part of it relied on class discussion of these issues. To solve this problem I had each student make a large placard with his/her name in large, dark letters. This allowed me to ask questions by name and for other students to address their comments to individual students by name. These placards must be large and easily read to be effective on a TV monitor. Your classroom may look like a Jeopardy set, but they are a must. Probably the largest factor in this whole problem is the lack of eye contact between the teacher and students. The students appear as rather tiny people on a small monitor set in the desk top, and to include the whole class in the picture the cameras must zoom back rather far. I have done presentations for public school teachers who are beginning to use an IDL system, and the most common complaint registered by them was the lack of eye contact while using the system. This is an adjustment that must be made, and for a teacher who interacts closely with their class this is a difficult hurdle to overcome. It does improve over time, but even after you get acclimated it still limits the teacher. This problem can be improved by technology and should be well thought out in working through the original classroom design.

As time went on students and teacher alike got used to the system, and interaction did become more common place. There were several track coaches in the class, and during class break they began discussing upcoming meets and trading information on other teams one or the other had already met. Often teachers would discuss what they were doing in their day classes and trade ideas. We were making progress.

Another important difference that soon became apparent was the additional amount of time it takes for planning and preparation. Since the only immediate way to distribute materials is by fax this must be done before class so that someone at each site can make copies for all students. If this is not arranged well before class it is disruptive and takes up valuable class time. Anything of any length or bulk must be sent ahead of time. It is helpful to have a courier system set up for this. Homework papers can be faxed rather easily, but lengthy term papers can create a problem.

A situation that may be peculiar to this particular equipment arrangement did not get satisfactorily resolved, and that is the placement of the teacher camera and monitors. The camera is in the ceiling at the back of the room. The monitors which show the other sites are set in the top of the teacher's desk. To

look at these monitors in order to see students at the other sites one must look down. This makes the teacher camera aimed at the top of the head. This can be solved by a rearrangement of equipment, but since we were visitors we were not able to make adjustments.

In this same realm of equipment problems, the cameras we used could only be moved by manipulating the control panel. What this meant is that effectively they were like fixed cameras. It was too disruptive for the teacher to move them and to have a student do it took him or her out of the class interaction, so they were set at the beginning of class and usually were left there. This created a zone approximately four feet wide in which the teacher had to stand. This may not be a problem for a teacher who lectures for a full class period, but for one who walks about the class and directs discussion from various vantage points, this is very confining. An answer to this problem is provided by a camera that follows a small transmitter worn by the teacher. The camera will then follow wherever he/she goes within range. Unfortunately this piece of technology was not available in our classroom settings. We must say, however, that there were minor problems, but the inconvenience was far offset by the excellent cooperation of the county education office staff. They were exceptional.

Timing is also different in an IDL class. Things take longer to accomplish than in a regular class. This is usually caused by adjusting equipment and with people making presentations that are not used to and comfortable with the system. Guest speakers or anyone not used to the procedure are often overwhelmed by being on TV They are either awestruck and cannot act naturally, or they over perform, appearing to be a budding star. There should be a short orientation for these people before they go on so they can act more naturally. We felt very sympathetic toward an assistant county auditor who came to discuss local taxes for schools. He was terrified with being on television and could not wait to finish and flee the room.

Suggestions

- Probably the most important fact to remember is that interactive television is a tool. One must keep foremost in mind that in all activities the focus is on the student, the conducting of a class, on learning and not on the television system. Interactive television is not a solution looking for a problem. It is not the answer in many cases and should be carefully analyzed to determine whether it is best for your situation. If it is decided to use interactive TV and you are designing a classroom, be sure it is designed with the teaching being the focus, not the technology. Classrooms de-

signed by technologists without the advice and input of teachers will be a poor place to teach students in most cases. This is a classroom not a studio.

- Plan on extra planning. For an IDL class to be most effective, a lot of pre-class work must be done. It is much more difficult to make adjustments and to get forgotten materials distributed when some of your students are miles away.

- If at all possible, practice with the equipment. A lot of class time can be saved if you are familiar and comfortable with all the equipment to be used before the first class meeting. Otherwise you will have to learn as you go along and will not be as effective the first part of the semester.

- Expect things to take longer than in a regular class. A rearrangement of activities might be needed to get everything accomplished that you would in a regular class.

- Discuss anticipated problems with the students during the first class. Ask them to help you make it work. Hopefully some of them will have had experience with the system and will be a valuable source of advice.

- Do periodic evaluations of how things are going. Follow the slogan of a former New York City mayor and ask your students frequently, "How am I doing?" Encourage your students to give you feedback on their perceptions of the functioning of the class as far as television is concerned. Ask for suggestions for improvement.

- If at all possible teach a class periodically from each site. It lets you be personalized with all your students. The students who only see you on an electronic screen will never make the same bond that is so helpful in graduate education. Talking face to face is much different than over fiber optics.

- If possible have students in the room you use as your primary teaching site. It will greatly enhance your effectiveness in interacting with your students. It makes it much easier also for you to "be yourself." It also gives you some live feedback from the class. It lets you "look them in the eye."

- Have office hours by phone for students who are far away. They must have some outside of class access to the teacher. Most of my graduate education teachers work during the day, and I found it helpful to provide my home telephone number. This may not be desirable to some, but it was helpful in this situation.

- Use forced interaction. To get the class participation you desire force the issue. Having it be part of the grade is a great stimulus. In Contemporary Issues in Education we use Education Week as a text. Part of the class period is devoted to discussion of articles that students present and discuss. All students are expected to interact.

- Use humor. Many awkward situations can be salvaged by a little humility and humor on the part of the teacher. After all, in this adventure many of the awkward situations were created by the teacher, so why not take credit for them.

- Relax, it will all work out somehow. Do not let the system take up your attention and your focus. We are there for the student. It is like the farmer who built a state-of-the-art, high tech barn for his cows. Everything was push buttons and computers. The cows theoretically never had to leave the barn or be touched by human hands. The farmer got so involved with his new toy and showed it off to so many people that he did not notice the cows were off their feed. Soon milk production dropped, and finally he went bankrupt. Do not bankrupt your class over a little technology.

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Individualized Mentoring and Distance Learning: An Experiment that Works

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INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL NOTE

For the past twenty-five years, Empire State College has used at least two quite different models to provide alternatives in higher education for a rather large number of students in New York State and beyond. Through the Center for Distance Learning about 1200 students per term are provided with correspondence courses, cable TV-supported courses, interactive computer based courses, and occasionally other mediated learning experiences. At the same time, the College provides about 10,000 students per year with individualized degree program development with the assistance of mentors, direct tutoring, and assessment of prior college-level learning. Not infrequently, students have used both methods of studying with varying degrees of satisfaction and academic success, depending on a great variety of factors. For those who complete their studies, student satisfaction tends to be fairly high in regard to both formats, but a

rather large number of students tend not to finish particular studies. Over the years, the College's rate of non-completion of studies and attrition (or non-reenrollment) rates have tended to be in the 25% to 50% range. This is not much different from national norms, but in recent years the retention rate has been improving rather markedly. Nevertheless, it seemed to be possible to achieve better than average completion and retention rates by using a combination of distance learning and direct mentoring (which is intensively immediate). Hence the experiment which we here describe was initiated in the fall of 1993.

There were of course other factors involved in the history of the experiment than just the desire to see if marrying mentoring-with mediated learning would work well. Locating a unit of the College in a particular small city surrounded by a rural, agricultural area seemed desirable to the administrators of the Western New York Region. Severe budget cuts had rendered earlier plans to do this impossible. These same budget cuts provided a stimulus .o create or find highly satisfactory academic programs which were at the same time highly productive. More efficient uses of the delivery system of the Center for Distance Learning could provide the desired level of productivity without losing the proven

effectiveness of primary mentoring. There was considerable skepticism and some keen opposition within the College about this idea. Nevertheless, circumstances in 1993 allowed the Dean to assign a full-time administrator with concurrent academic rank to the location in question with the precise objective of implementing a new program in the College, but one which had all recognized and tested components, with student learning as the central concern and faculty mentors using mediated delivery of content for at least 50% of the students' studies as the primary focus of the experiment. A full-time tenure track faculty member has provided the leadership for the second full year of operation.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE MODEL OF THE EXPERIMENT

There are few fundamental principles which underlie the educational model in question, and all of them seem to have been already subject to extensive testing within Empire State College or in similar institutions such as the British Open University, or there were good "intuitive" reasons to employ them because they are analogous to existing program components within the College.

1. Primary Mentoring is an excellent keystone for college education, particularly for mature adult students who can effectively interact with an expert faculty member;
2. Distance education delivery models can provide good to excellent course content in highly desirable degree programs (although there may be limitations due to practical or historical considerations, such as there are in the Empire State College program);
3. Predictable, periodic, direct personal contact by a mentor or tutor will improve students' completion of studies, academic progress, retention, graduation, and over-all satisfaction with a distance learning program (this is an hypothesis as well as a principle);
4. Assessment of prior learning, which has been limited in the historical CDL model in ESC, would be available to the students in this unit as for all other students in the College's typical programs;
5. The "CDL with Mentor" model could be more productive (in credit generation) than other ESC units and be more successful than the CDL program has been in regard to retention and the other objectives mentioned in #3 above (this also may be regarded as an hypothesis, but in difficult fiscal circumstances, it may be the deciding factor in making this project worth doing in the minds of many).

PROJECTED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Primary mentoring for degree program planning — 4 credits
   a. introductory group sessions, whenever possible;
   b. group orientation, whenever possible;
   c. individualized advisement, whenever needed;
   d. asynchronous contact available at all times for trouble shooting;
2. Students' studies
   a. CDL courses available 3 to 5 terms per year on a predictable schedule; — 50% - 100% of needed studies
   b. video-based, computer-based and satellite courses used on an as-needed, as-desired basis;
   c. "early registration" to assure best course selection in CDL sections;
   d. tutor and mentor contact in small group sessions at least twice per term for reinforcement, trouble-shooting, advisement, and peer support—strongly encouraged but optional;
3. Tutoring for additional studies, depending on students' degree programs. — As needed
4. Assessment of prior learning, including experiential learning requiring expert evaluation. — 0-96 credits

OUTCOMES

1. Improved retention, course completion, satisfactory academic progress, graduation, and student satisfaction rated. At the end of each year, an extended student survey will be conducted and the other noted factors will be tracked to compare the results with both CDL's matriculated students and other students in the College.

2. Increased productivity over other unit locations in the College: It was predicted that, with the use of CDL content for much of the students' learning needs, each FTE faculty line would be able to generate 1350-1700 credits per annum. The variances were allowed depending on how many individual contracts would be needed, which might be significantly different for some students, how much time would be spent by faculty in doing assessment of prior learning, how much trouble shooting is needed, how effective CDL is in offering the courses most needed/desired by students.

AN EVALUATION OF THE CDL WITH MENTOR MODEL OF LEARNING AT ESC

The CDL with Mentor Model (also called "the Batavia Model" at SUNY Empire State College) is a combination of distance learning with a local support staff made up of at least three persons: a primary mentor/advisor who is on call to answer student questions, solve problems, and intervene when appropriate with the distance learning tutor; another mentor who is available to meet at least monthly with students on a "drop in" basis on a scheduled date; and the local secretary who is a source of information and reassurance to students in the distance learning studies.

The distance learning courses are well developed programs consisting of a detailed syllabus or course guide and one or more textbooks and reading lists. Students have a predetermined list of assignments and due dates. They also are provided the names, phone numbers, and conference times of their tutors. They and the tutors are instructed to contact one another at least every two weeks and whenever there are problems or questions.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

From the two surveys conducted near the end of the spring term in each of the two years since the program began, we have learned that students generally like the printed materials provided by the distance learning program. The students like the detailed instructions, the precise dates on which assignments are due, and the clearly stated methods by which their work will be assessed. These matters are sometimes spelled out in less detail in learning contracts with individual mentors. Students very much like contact with the tutors; some wish it were more frequent. Some few students have had difficulty reaching their tutors; these students tend to be less satisfied with their studies than those students who sought intervention. This had seemed intuitively to be the case; the surveys confirmed our expectations. One of the most important roles of the local staff is to maintain frequent contact with students and to intervene on their behalf when appropriate. Those small acts provided just the personal touch necessary to keep students satisfied with learning at a distance.

Our students, just as is the case with all adult students returning to college, sometimes have problems—financial problems, unexpected additional work load, loss of job, marital problems, or health problems. They appreciate our concern and willingness to keep their files active. They like the fact that we understand real-world problems of adults and do not "punish" them for failing to complete their studies as originally agreed upon. They are uncomfortable enough having to drop out or to ask for an exten-

sion of time. The fact that we treat it matter-of factly reduces their discomfort.

We provide the local "face" that keeps their distance learning from becoming totally impersonal and mechanical. We hold "open hours" one afternoon and evening each month. Not many students take advantage of it, but they are glad that it is available if needed. Generally, they prefer to talk with fellow students—commiserate, perhaps.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

How well have we succeeded? Our retention rate has varied between 86.4% and 96.2%— outstanding by any measure.

Term by term this has been our experience: 86.5% of 55 out of 66 students in the first term (Fall 1993) reenrolled; 90.1% or 73 out of 81 in the Spring 1994 reenrolled; 88.9% or 40 out of 45 in the Summer 1994 term reenrolled; 96.3% or 77 out of 80 in the Fall 1994 term reenrolled; and 91.% or 65 out of 71 in the Spring 1995 term reenrolled. We had 40 students in the Summer 1995 term; we will not have complete records to indicate how many may have dropped out until after the end of the fall term. We know of only one so far: she has determined that a nursing degree is more appropriate for her needs than a degree in Community and Human Services. We do not offer a BSN.

To put these numbers into perspective, the retention rate for the entire College for students who complete their first learning contract is 70%. For the Genesee Valley Center as a whole, it is approximately 66%. There are no separate data for the Center for Distance Learning students.

We have carefully studied those who have dropped out and have tried to learn how and why we were unable to continue serving them. Most of those who have chosen not to continue with us were either nonmatriculated students who had enrolled with us for one or more specific studies rather than for a degree or were ill-prepared students who had difficulty working alone at a distance. For example, two were students who had some degree of learning disability for which we were unable to compensate. Two were unable to secure financial aid. Two took medical leaves of absence. Two moved out of state. We believe that had our "new and improved" model of service been in practice from the beginning, we might have been able to retain those students who were inadequately prepared for working alone at a distance. We believe that our frequent telephoning and offering encouragement and support should make it easier for less well prepared students to complete their work than if they are left to negotiate the course primarily on their own.

The Batavia Unit
Genesee Valley Center
SUNY Empire State College
Enrollment Data
Fall 1993 - Summer 1995

Term	933	Fall 93	941	Spr 94	942	Sum 94	943	Fall 94	951	Spr 95	952	Sum 95
Student Status	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Half Time	41	62.1%	48	59.3%	16	35.6%	39	48.8%	35	49.3%	23	57.5%
Full Time	16	24.2%	29	35.8%	25	55.6%	26	32.5%	26	36.6%	9	22.5%
Nonmatriculated	9	13.6%	4	4.9%	4	8.9%	15	18.8%	10	14.1%	8	20.0%
Total Enrolled	66	100.0%	81	100.0%	45	100.0%	80	100.0%	71	100.0%	40	100.0%
Failed to Enroll Next Term	9	13.6%	8	9.9%	5	11.1%	3	3.8%	6	8.5%		
Reenrolled/Completed Studies	57	86.4%	73	90.1%	40	88.9%	77	96.3%	65	91.5%		
Male/Female Distribution												
Male	32	48.5%	36	44.4%	16	35.6%	31	38.8%	25	35.2%	10	25.0%
Female	34	51.5%	45	55.6%	29	64.4%	49	61.3%	46	64.8%	30	75.0%
Total	66	100.0%	81	100.0%	45	100.0%	80	100.0%	71	100.0%	40	100.0%
Area of Study Distribution												
BM&E	25	37.9%	28	34.6%	14	31.1%	27	33.8%	29	40.8%	17	42.5%
C&HS	22	33.3%	31	38.3%	24	53.3%	34	42.5%	22	31.0%	13	32.5%
Cultural Studies	4	6.1%	5	6.2%	1	2.2%	1	1.3%	5	7.0%	0	0.0%
Educational Studies	3	4.5%	4	4.9%	0	0.0%	3	3.8%	3	4.2%	1	2.5%
Historical Studies	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	1	2.5%
Human Development	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	1	1.4%	3	7.5%
Interdisciplinary	1	1.5%	2	2.5%	1	2.2%	1	1.3%	2	2.8%	3	7.5%
SMAT	3	4.5%	4	4.9%	2	4.4%	3	3.8%	2	2.8%	2	5.0%
Social Theory	2	3.0%	2	2.5%	2	4.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Technology	3	4.5%	2	2.5%	1	2.2%	1	1.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
The Arts	3	4.5%	3	3.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
ASL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	11.3%	6	8.5%	0	0.0%
Total	66	100.0%	81	100.0%	45	100.0%	80	100.0%	71	100.0%	40	100.0%

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

We had expec' ed to find that more students fail to complete their distance learning studies than their local studies. In some terms this is the case; in other terms the reverse is true. There do s not seem to be a clear explanation or a clear trend. It may be that over the long run there is no significant difference between the experiences in the two kinds of studies. The differences which exist may be attributable to the personalities and preparation of the individual students rather than to the types of study in which they are enrolled. One note of caution should be raised: the evaluations for students in the Spring 1995 term are not all recorded yet. There is a lag of two to three months between completion of studies and final entry of outcomes into the official records. Because the Spring term runs from January through April for CDL (and for sixteen weeks beginning any day between January 2 and April 9), we do not have all of the Spring 1995 final reports. Therefore, to be conservative we recorded Not Completed for all studies for which there was no official record on file. Once all of the records are filed, we anticipate that the actual completion rates will be somewhat higher than those shown in the following table.

The Batavia Unit
Genesee Valley Center
SUNY Empire State College
Completion Data
Fall 1993 - Spring 1995

	Fall 1993	Spring 1994	ummer 1994	Fall 1994	Spring 1995
Number CDL Studies Completed	50	69	28	45	37
Number CDL Studies Attempted	63	74	33	61	57
Percentage CDL Studies Completed	79.4%	93.2%	84.8%	73.8%	64.9%
Number Mentored Studies Completed	73	103	51	72	54
Number Mentored Studies Attempted	83	117	53	93	90
Percentage Mentored Studies Completed	88.0%	88.0%	96.2%	77.4%	60.0%
Number Other Studies* Completed	12	17	14	23	14
Number Other Studies* Attempted	12	20	14	26	16
Percentage Other Studies* Completed	100.0%	85.0%	100.0%	88.5%	87.5%
Total Number Studies Completed	135	189	93	140	105
Total Number Studies Attempted	158	211	100	180	163
Percentage Total Studies Completed	85.4%	89.6%	93.0%	77.8%	64.4%

* SUNY by Satellite, Group Studies, or Cross-Registrations with other colleges.

At least two things account for the fact that the completion rate of distance learning studies typically is somewhat lower than that of locally mentored or group studies: with distance learning as with classroom and other term-based programs there is a somewhat rigid calendar. The student's work must be completed by a stated date. With local one-to-one mentoring we tend to be flexible (possibly too much so). We are also available, so that they can drop by unan~ and talk. Sometimes this is easier than telephoning a relative stranger and explaining a personal problem. Sometimes there is a real problem making contact with the distance learning tutor. Students do not tell us in all cases. Sometimes when they do tell us, it is too late. We are beginning to take the initiative in calling students to determine whether they have been in contact with their tutors and whether there is any way we can help. We have had several requests to intervene on their behalf. We are hoping that even more frequent contact with students will reduce still further the rate of failure to complete distance learning studies. We believe that the evidence supports our contention that frequent contact has kept the rate of drop out from the program much lower than is typical of such programs. Now we are seeking to improve the rate of completion of individual studies.

From our two-year experience we have determined that beginning this term we will not wait for the students to seek our help. We will begin telephoning them at the end of the second week and at the end of each month during the sixteen-week term. We will follow up with phone calls and notes to their distance learning tutors. We will ask their tutors how we may help them to serve their students better.

We have asked students to tell us of their satisfactory experiences and their unsatisfactory experiences so that we can improve service to them. The comments are shared with the Director of the Center for Distance Learning who assures us that he shares our goals.

OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE MODEL

What does this model offer other schools and other centers within our own college? For the school or the center with a widely dispersed population this model can prove educationally effective and economical, and for the students it can prove convenient. If the geographic territory is also subject to seasonally rough weather, as ours is, students may find this format of distance study particularly attractive. From the school's perspective, it is more economical to have a central staff of tutors working by correspondence and telephone with a reasonable number of stu-

dents who are geographically dispersed than having several underutilized staffs in multiple locations. One local mentor/advisor can offer counsel in curriculum design and general academics to a fairly large number of students in a wide range of disciplines. Populations which could not otherwise be served can be reached: the geographically remote, the disabled, the housebound, and those whose schedules prohibit regular school attendance. There are definite economies of scale possible.

There are dangers, however. The quality of the distance learning tutorial staff must be maintained at a high level. The contributions of the tutors must be appreciated; they must be trained well and given adequate support and compensation. If part-time, poorly paid, inadequately trained tutorial staff are substituted for full-time, well trained, decently paid, and highly motivated mentors, the quality of the educational program will suffer. The student will be poorly served; the reputation of the institution will be tarnished.

Because the future is likely to require continuous learning and adjustment from everyone, the combination of distance learning and personalized local advice and support can provide a guided independent approach to learning that will prepare the student for a lifetime of successful learning experiences.

Integrating Student Services into Distance Learning

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Peggy Falkenstein, MA, Dean of Distance Learning, Sinclair Community College

This presentation is one result of the project component of the National Institute for Leadership Development. The Institute, sponsored by Phoenix College, Maricopa Community College, The League for Innovation in the Community College and the American Association of Women in Community Colleges, provides a one week seminar in professional development for women administrators in higher education. A project that is to be completed within one year and that will benefit the college while providing the participant with a leadership experience is a significant part of the program. The subject of this project is how to integrate student services into distance learning. The presentation will provide some statistics regarding the Distance Learning Division at Sinclair Community College, show and describe the video that is completed, share the next phase of the project which is part of the electronic college and provide an opportunity to dialogue and answer questions.

Sinclair Community College is a single campus, urban, commuter school that has an approximate student population of 21,000. Close to 7,500 of those students choose to access the college through its Distance Learning Program on an annual basis. The Distance Learning Division offers course to students in several modes: "live" interactive courses via an ITFS system (one way video, two way audio), courses on video and audio tape, and courses delivered via computer and modem over the local freenet.

The newest delivery mode, the "live" interactive delivery was activated this current fall quarter and three courses are being transmitted to six different remote sites. There are 86 students enrolled in the campus components of these courses and another 85 at remote sites.

The videotape component, known as TV Sinclair, has been in existence since 1979. More than 70 course lectures and instructional materials are offered by means of video, audio, and/or print-based methods. Video courses comprise the largest part of the division at present and are delivered to students in a variety of formats which include broadcast over public television and cable, a VHS tape checkout system and on-campus VHS viewing in the

Individualized Learning Center (ILC).

In an effort to enhance the taped telecourses and promote greater interactivity among students and the instructor, a computer component has also been added to several of the TV Sinclair courses. This is referred to as the Sinclair Electronic College (SEC). Course lectures are still made available on videotape, but the remaining course components are available on-line through the area freenet. Through a series of read-only bulletin boards, students access course assignments, information regarding testing and course requirements, and other material needed o complete the course. By means of several public message boards as well as private e-mail, students can communicate directly with their instructors and fellow-students, carry on discussions and debates, and ask pertinent questions. They can upload and download course assignments or other files as needed. Students can connect to the Sinclair Electronic College by a computer and modem from home or from labs on campus. Currently there are 12 courses that may be accessed via SEC.

The Distance Learning Program includes a variety of disciplines with over 70 different courses offered and over 40 instructors involved. It is currently possible for students to do an entire Liberal Arts degree program by means of distance education and independent study. Plans are under way to extend this option to other degree programs.

The TV Sinclair videotaped telecourses are unique in that the majority are produced by Sinclair faculty who develop and record their own lecture materials. These are broadcast quality courses that are produced in cooperation with the local public television station using their facilities. It was perceived that this same process could be used to make a video that would provide information about student services offered on campus. Th: video would be placed at the beginning of the course tapes tl at are checked out so that the students would receive this information directly in the same modality that they access the college. Thus began the inception of the project to be reported.

The primary intent of the project is to explore strategies to deliver information about student services to those students who choose to access the campus in alternative ways. The project has three main features. The first part was to create a video to promote the availability of student services. The second phase is to create a bulletin board and have available a counselor via the electronic college. The final phase will be to create a "live" interactive orientation for students taking courses in remote sites. Since the project is still in process the first 2 components will be the focus of the presentation.

In the planning stage of the video portion it was necessary to

gather some data on the target population (see Tables 1 and 2). Also knowing some of their needs was helpful which was extrapolated from a survey administered in the previous year (see Figure 1). So began the birth of the video. Some of the preparation included conceptualizing the message, writing the script, preparing the graphics, casting, taping and editing. The final product was completed in August and integrated into 2 course sections in Fall quarter 1995. A survey and phone follow-up will be conducted in November to get feedback and input from students on their use and value of the video to their overall experience at the college and to assess what other needs might be met by the Student Services Division that are not being met now with this particular population. This video will be shown during the pres ntation.

Currently we are in the process of designing an appropriate mode of accessing counseling and other student services through the electronic college. A demonstration of the Sinclair Electronic College will be provided during the session at the conference.

Figure 1. TV Sinclair survey results conducted in Spring 1993.

- 42% were taking 12 or more credit hours
- 71% were enrolled in only one TV Sinclair course
- 42% taking their first TV Sinclair course
- 61% would like on-campus review/discussion session
- 49% had no contact with the instructor except for tests
- 92% said they would take another TV Sinclair course
- 64% preferred more "take-home" courses
- Primary reasons for taking TV Sinclair courses:
  - 41% work/family related conflict
  - 33% scheduling conflict
- Choice of orientation:
  - 39% on video
  - 33% no orientation
  - 28% in person
- How did TV Sinclair courses compare to the classroom courses?

- 66% about the same
- 22% more difficult
- 12% easier

- Computer interaction:

- 67% would be interested in interacting with instructor by computer/modem
  - 56% of these had computers
  - 34% of these had modems

Table 1

Comparison of Student Demographics in TV Sinclair for Spring 90, Winter 93, and Fall 93

CATEGORY	GROUPING	PERCENT		
		F93	W93	SP90
SEX	Male	27%	29%	28%
	Female	73%	71%	72%
AGE	Under 18			
	18-20	95	65	95
	21-30	47%	47%	46%
	31-40	30%	31%	30%
	41-50	12%	12%	12%
	51-60	2%	2%	1%
	61+		1%	1%
RACE	White	83%	85%	85%
	Black	15%	13%	14%
	Asian	1%	1%	1%
	American Indian	1%	<1%	<1%
	Hispanics	1%	<1%	<1%

Table 2

Comparison of Student Demographics in TV Sinclair for Spring 90, Winter 93, and Fall 93 (cont.)

CATEGORY	GROUPING	PERCENT		
RESIDENCE	In county	74.2%	74.6%	
	Out of county	25.4%	24.8%	
	Out of state			
	Foreign			
ATTENDANCE STATUS	Full-time	39%	49%	40%
	Part-time	61%	51%	60%
	Day	87%	90%	
	Evening	13%	9%	
	Weekend		1%	
SEEKING/NON-SEEKING DEGREES	Seeking	88%	88%	86%
	Non-seeking	12%	12%	14%
STUDENT LOAD	0 - 11 hours	61%		
	12+ hours	39%		
COURSE LOAD	First quarter (entering)	7%	5%	
	Freshman (under 45 hrs)	42%	41%	
	Sophomore (over 45 hrs)	51%	54%	

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Organization and Pedagogy in the Online Seminar

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INTRODUCTION

The most important questions in computer mediated instruction are not technological but pedagogical. Effective online learning can be achieved using fairly primitive machinery. Correspondingly, the latest equipment may yield little more than an electronic cocktail party.

Much computer discourse, synchronous or asynchronous, has the stability of a feather on the wind. People ramble, topics shift unpredictably, statements are cryptic, individuals butt in and then leave, conversations lurch, participants flame each other. This emerging culture of discourse spills over into the academic arena as programs of computer mediated instruction (CMI) are developed.

The first purpose of this paper is to detail organizational and pedagogical steps to insure substantive, in-depth, and sustained dialogue in the virtual seminar room. The paper will be based on my own experience teaching an online seminar in the Adult Degree Program of Norwich University; on interviews with teachers in the Dial Program of The New School, The George Washington University, and Norwich University; and on published sources.

I will address CMI as it is conducted via conferencing programs such as VAX Notes, Caucus, or Lotus Notes. I will generally assume that exchanges are asynchronous - as opposed to synchronous or real time - and that the computer is the primary mode of instruction and exchange, in contrast to face-to-face classroom instruction with CMI as a supplement. In this discussion I will speak about the seminar, a mode of learning in which the subject is non-technical, the number of participants limited to a dozen or fewer, and dialogue paramount.

The second purpose of this paper is to offer several speculations about the broader nature of CMI.

TIME AND TOPIC

Conferencing software allows users to break a subject into sub-topics. Here are several variations.

Sequential, Timed Topics. In my online seminars at Norwich University the first topic is rules of the seminar. This topic includes an overview of the seminar, how often students should log on, guidance about addressing all participants and not just the teacher, time allotted to the entire seminar and to each topic. Topic one is always open and students read it for announcements, additional guidance, and other information each time they log on.

Subsequent topics are timed and addressed sequentially. For

example, topic two might be a discussion of character in the novel we're reading. I might allow four days for this discussion. At the conclusion of the four days the topic will be closed and I will set another topic. In this way, student attention is focused sharply on a single issue. I reserve the privilege to set topics.

Simultaneous Topics. Deborah Schupack is a writer on the adjunct faculty of Norwich's Adult Degree Program who teaches an online creative writing course at The DIAL Program of The New School for Social Research. Ms. Schupack divides her course into five topics, as follows. These topics are open simultaneously and are addressed by students throughout the course. (personal communication, April 12, 1995, August 17, 1995)

General Class Announcements.

Discussion of the Craft of Writing. This is a forum for students to ask and discuss questions about the craft of creative writing.

Discussion of Assigned Readings. These discussion are generally initiated by the teacher.

Writing Exercises. These are set by the teacher.

A Separate Topic for Each Student's Work. Each student has her/his own topic in which the student posts a creative work. Other students and the teacher then comment on this work.

Overload. In some CMI programs the number of topics in one course or seminar may escalate beyond control, thus recreating the very problem this device is intended to solve. For example, graduate students at the Fielding Institute reported information overload as electronic postings to their online seminars multiplied. (Gladfelter and Hansen, 1995)

Other Considerations. Many seminars begin with electronic introductions. Some programs have a "coffee house" topic where students can gather for social interaction. It might be worthwhile to permit students to set certain topics. Ms. Schupack maintains a computer file of answers to frequently asked questions which can be transferred to one or another of her topics, as appropriate.

FREQUENCY AND KIND OF STUDENT INTERACTION

Frequency. I require my online students to log on daily to participate in the discussion. Ms. Schupack requires students to log on three times a week.

There is an interesting, delayed quality to asynchronous discussion, perhaps analogous to the exchange of correspondence among scholars in pre-electronic days. As opposed to the telephone or the face-to-face seminar room, the pauses inherent in this oddly retrospective technology leave room for deliberate thought and reflection. I believe this enforced delay is a positive

attribute of the technology. Still, it is crucial that students log on regularly and frequently so that conversation doesn't jerk to a total stop.

Kind. In my online seminar the students' first contributions were brief and telegraphic, mirroring the culture of discourse of email and chat groups. In response, I modelled a more extended (two to three screens) way of addressing the question at hand. Most students' statements grew in length during the course of the seminar.

Other kinds of unproductive student contributions may also occur: students may talk too much, or too little, they may be belligerent, or vague, or aim to please the teacher rather than join in a discussion with other students, or they may stray wildly from the point. In such cases the online instructor will call upon her/his repertoire of spoken classroom skills to fix the situation.

In addition, most systems also permit the teacher to have a private chat with a student, something not as easily achieved in a face-to-face seminar.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE TEACHER

There are several distinct patterns of teacher involvement in the online seminar. I'll speak about four.

Fully Engaged Teacher. The teacher acts very much like the teacher in a face-to-face seminar. S/he'll log on every day for a half hour or more. S/he guides the discussion, explicates the text, poses the questions, and responds to many if not most student statements. Full teacher engagement in the online seminar is very time consuming for the instructor. Full engagement leads to a dilemma of this medium which I will discuss farther on.

Facilitator. The facilitator may log on every day but will not as a rule explicate the text nor provide extensive answers to questions. The facilitator, as Ms. Schupack notes, will "pick her/his battles," i. e. s/he will respond selectively to issues in the discussion. The main role of the facilitator is to move the discussion along, posing strategic questions and pulling all the students into the discussion.

Visitor. The visiting teacher may only log on once a week. S/he will comment on the course of the discussion and may suggest new directions or questions. Again, the medium allows the visitor to pick her/his battles. It's conceivable that the visitor might explicate a text where there is real confusion among students. In the visitor model, the content of the discussion and the initiative to carry it forward are largely the students'.

Mixed. It is also possible to combine individual and group work. For example, the instructor might pick the visitor model for group discussion but then might also work intensively with each individual student via a private channel, most likely email

and document transfer. Since a number of external degree programs, including Norwich's Adult Degree Program, are based on individualized study plans and one-on-one mentoring, the mixed model seems especially promising.

OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE

What is most important, I believe, is that the organizer of the online seminar decide in advance the nature of student participation and teacher involvement and make these explicit as the seminar begins. As Professor Gary Confessore of The George Washington University points out, the conventions of the face-to-face seminar are part of our educational culture and are commonly understood by most students. (personal communication, August 17, 1995) This is not true, however, with online seminars. Explicitness about the kind, frequency, and quantity of student and faculty participation will help construct the culture in which computer mediated learning can effectively occur.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The community building aspects of CMI are especially important for external degree programs. In our online seminars, students uniformly report experiencing a sense of connectedness, of belonging to a learning community. This was my powerful impression as well. The medium and the content make people feel that they are close to each other, that they are sharing something of mutual importance, that they are embarked on a common venture. Again, the medium appears to revive the closeness individuals felt during the great age of written correspondence.

DILEMMAS OF THE MEDIUM

Cost. Online seminars are expensive: the teacher is typing everything s/he'd say orally in a regular class. Thus, a fully engaged teacher instructing twelve students in a 3 credit online offering may expend as much time as teaching twice or three times that number in a face-to-face 3 credit course. Roughly speaking then, the online offering is at least twice as costly as conventional instruction.

Misuse. Correspondingly, if for economy's sake student numbers in the online offering are doubled or tripled then the high interactivity of the seminar is greatly diminished. On-screen lectures, tests, term papers, and other conventional items will likely replace the lively dialogue of the seminar. Indeed, many CMI programs at present take this conventional form. In my opinion, our propensity to use new technology in old ways robs the medium of its potential for improvement in instruction.

Opportunity. Opportunities for improving instruction are imbedded in these dilemmas. The main question is, how can cost effectiveness be combined with high interactivity? As Norwich University's Chief Information Officer, Philip Susmann,

pointed out to me, answers to this question revolve around the teacher's role in online instruction and, correspondingly, how much and what kind of work the student does without the teacher. (personal communication, April 14, 1995) In the mixed model described above, for example, instruction might be organized in the following fashion.

Reading, exercises, and writing assignments: completed by students themselves, appropriate document transfer to teacher.

Online discussions: conducted by students according to established guidelines and rules for online participation, with teacher filling the role of visitor (see above); larger classes may be divided into smaller discussion groups for this purpose.

One-on-one (teacher and student) mentoring and instruction: carried out via email and addressing individual student problems and issues of higher order cognitive functions: analysis, synthesis, abstraction, theory, critical thinking, and the like.

This model would promote high interactivity and community among students, would allow the faculty member to focus on teaching higher order cognitive skills, and would in concept be cost effective.

Another traditional feature of college teaching, the lecture, comes into focus as well. For decades the lecture has been a dominant mode of college and university instruction. The onerous task of keyboarding a score of lectures every semester - and then students having to read them - may spell the denouement of this teaching method. Faculty may choose to seek out published sources for the content components of their courses. In this case, the model I've suggested could provide a promising blueprint for other types of faculty engagement with students. Specifically, if teacher dominated transfer-of-knowledge tasks are accomplished through reading and exercise, then teacher time is saved for more complex instruction. Furthermore, as teacher dominated group instruction diminishes, collaborative learning and self-directed study - both well suited to adult and distance learners - may come more to the fore. In this way, the model plays to the strengths of computer technology as a means to improve learning rather than as a vehicle to recycle (unsatisfactorily, in my opinion) traditional forms of higher education. What is called for now, I believe, is vigorous experimentation with the medium along these lines.

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LEARNING

Connecting Learning and Activism: An Experiment in Adult Higher Education

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Many, though not all, adult learners set their sights on the completion of an undergraduate degree as a means of improving their employment status: to make themselves more marketable, to qualify for retention or promotion, to change careers, etc. At Capital University, a required series of twelve core courses in the liberal arts also lays the foundation for empowering students to become active agents for change. For a number of our students, personal engagement in effecting change for the common good is already a purposeful part of their lives. Those in our social work and human services programs, for example, seek to develop their bases of knowledge and skills in order to promote individual growth and social justice.

Most of our students, however, might echo the complaint voiced by man in a recent Humanities class: "How can you expect us to focus on all of these issues (global interdependencies, cultural diversity, societal problems and models for resolving them) when we hardly have time to work our jobs, raise our children, relate to our partners, prepare for courses? It's just too much!" The answer to his very practical question lies, we believe, in implementing an and ragogical approach, activist learning, that integrates various aspects of learning and grants learners access to their own authority to act to promote the common good.

Toward this end, we are exploring ways to connect, dovetail, and overlap assignments in UC 110, College Reading and Writing (a required core course), with an extended orientation course, FOLD (an acronym for Focus on Learning and Development), which is strongly

recommended to all adult learner who are entering or returning to college after having been away from academic study for a number of years.

Both UC 110 and FOLD are process-oriented courses that involve self-assessment, the development of research skills (library research as well as in the field), experimentation with individual and collaborative learning situations, and the development of individualized learning

and degree plans. Both courses create opportunities for students to explore issues of national and/or local controversy. In addition, students collaborate or work individually on a Self-Initiated Project (SIP), which allows them to plan and carry out a

new learning activity that will have tangible results for a targeted audience.

Defining the "Activist Learner"

By the term "activist learner" we mean to describe a person who, whether in a formal educational program or not, takes an active, assertive role in supporting measures that affect our common good—first, and continually, by seeking to increase her/his level of conscious awareness of personal, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental realities. Our definition emphasizes the individual's development of consciousness and content knowledge and her/his relationship and responsibility to community. We use the term "activist learner" to describe all of us who are engaged in this kind of personal growth, who share the goal of participating more fully in our lives and of supporting others in participating more fully in their own.

We do not mean to promulgate any one particular social or political agenda, though we have our own, based on principles of social and economic justice, the right to self-determination, and respect for the environment. For us, activism = creative participation and purposeful engagement. Not only do our courses include personal growth experiences, they emphasize how to contextually construct and critically analyze an issue, and how to communicate effectively, with an actual audience, rather than merely providing practice in the techniques of research and writing.

Poet Denise Levertov, one of the most beloved and acclaimed of contemporary U.S. poets, speaks of the poet's and all of our need to express "active empathy," to become active agents for change, based on our understanding of our oneness with others, in the face of the grave issues of our time: the liberation of oppressed peoples, and the potential for human and global annihilation. Such an understanding must be grounded in effective information gathering, thoughtful and careful critical thinking, and an ownership of one's own views, which of course does not preclude attaining even greater (or perhaps contradictory) insights that are followed by efforts to bring about change on the local level and beyond.

Activist Learning in Practice

FOLD: Focus On Learning and Development

The FOLD course has evolved over the past several years. During the first meeting, each learner is asked to complete the Kolb Learning Style Inventory. We discuss the results of the instrument, and also the implications for individual analysis and use of the results. The learner is then asked to write a brief reflective essay concerning the activity.

Frequently this assignment results in learners' recognition of their personal strengths and weaknesses, not only in terms of

academic skills, but also in terms of how they relate to and work with other learners. In terms of activist learning, this activity usually results in students becoming more proactive in their choices of academic studies and majors. They are also led to think more about other decisions relating to their accountability to themselves, their families, and to larger societal issues.

At the next class meeting, the learners are introduced to the concept of information retrieval using the resources of a public or university library. A brief research assignment requiring learners to utilized on-line reference sources for retrieval of information is completed and then discussed by the group.

These two assignments serve to prepare learners for the first collaborative learning assignment, the self-initiated project (SIP). The SIP is an activist learning project, as learners must identify a topic they wish to study which will result in an action or promotion of positive change. This assignment generally has significant impact on adult learners, as they tend to be more willing to participate in class discussions of social issues for which they have taken ownership than they would be if responding to an instructor's lectures and/or group reading assignments alone. We believe these SIPs to be a significant step in the conceptualization and development of proactive efforts on the part of our students as activist learners.

UC 110: College Reading and Writing

UC 110, the introductory writing course, lays a foundation for the critical and creative writing and thinking skills learners will need and will continue to develop throughout their study at Capital.

The course re-emphasizes writing as an act of communication, as well as a form of activism, in which students integrate their life experiences, their deepest concerns, and their research and field work, as they develop projects that can stand on their own: articles, book reviews, letters to an editor, guest columns, etc. This writing can be sent out as "letters to the world"—activist statements that represent an important aspect of participatory democracy.

We don't, of course, and this needs to be said, legislate or attempt to influence what topics students will consider, what positions they will take, or make any other intrusive demands. We allow them to take ownership of their own proposals, to discuss them with other learners as well as myself, and to draw up action plans for how best to explore a particular problem or issue.

A major assignment in the course (following a personal narrative and a summary of an essay) is the researched essay, which addresses an issue of national and/or local controversy. Students report that the practice they have had writing summaries

is invaluable to them as they begin their research and attempt to tease out the most salient points from chapters, articles and interviews. Drafts of these essays are read both by peers and by me, with emphasis given to the acknowledgment of counter-positions, an analysis of underlying assumptions and values, a discussion of additional questions that must be addressed in further study of the issue, and implications for the future: that is, based on their research and understanding of the issue, how to promote positive change?

One student, who works in local government and is no longer a resident of the municipality in which she is employed, wrote an essay in which she explored the history of residency requirements, across the country, for holding public office or serving as police officers, firefighters, teachers, etc. She described the issue and the problems it raised in several local municipalities, including the city of Cleveland; then she focused on the municipality in which she works, and the struggle she faces with those who regard her as an outsider. She took an informed stand on the issue, based on her personal experience, and backed up by research and well informed arguments that examined many aspects of the future. Modified as a letter to the editor, she has used her work in UC 110 to make her voice heard in the community.

Other students have addressed topics such as gender discrimination in employee dress codes; the history of U.S. intervention in Haiti, and the potential danger of surrogate motherhood for creating a class of handmaids or second class women hired to produce children by those who can afford to purchase their services. Students report a depth of engagement and sense of satisfaction from producing work that allows them to articulate their positions in a public domain beyond the classroom.

Evaluation of FOLD and UC 110

Besides the benefit of providing a context for class discussion and individual and group projects which promote critical and creative thinking, research, organizational, and communication skills, we believe there are other positive outcomes to be derived from the activist learning assignments in FOLD and UC 110. One that is immediately apparent is that adult learners are afforded the opportunity to observe a clear working connection between the courses they are taking toward degree completion and the content knowledge, understanding, and skills they use and can develop within their daily lives at work, at home, and in the community. In academia we frequently tend to take a cookie cutter approach to higher education, in which students are told to take certain required courses without any clear discussion of how those courses may be related to one another, nor how they serve to build upon the life, workplace, and academic skills stu-

dents have already achieved or are developing. Adult learners need to have open discussions concerning how the assignments they are asked to complete fulfill a specific goal or objective and will in the long run be beneficial to them, and possibly others, on a level other than as an academic requirement.

A second benefit to learners is the opportunity to collaborate with others. The synergy that occurs while engaged in a small group learning process often tends to motivate learners highly. When learners are given the task of developing a project that will result in their own action or promotion of positive chan ;e, they tend to begin thinking on a more mutual and global level, beyond the perhaps more common level of self-preservation in the classroom or workplace.

Finally, the topics selected by the learners for their projects provide a wealth of information which can be readily extended through research. The accessibility of on-line reference sources, both primary and secondary, provides students with confidence that they are able to research effectively and connect to the "information superhighway" in a meaningful way. Their enthusiasm breeds further desire in the sense that it propels learners to take on more ambitious and focused projects in other courses and to apply their academic coursework toward multiple personal and community goals.

Activist Learning: Targets and Goals

We believe that the effort to relate course assignments and learning outcomes in a way that will be meaningful for learners serves as a means of making connections between the academic lives of students, their personal development, and their participation in community. This is clearly an andragogical approach that engages adult learners as active agents for change in their education, their lives, and society.

Our introduction of activist learning activities early in a student's academic program prepares them specifically to develop an extended research project that is required of each graduate, a capstone course we call Significant Project. We like to look at the FOLD and Significant Project courses as "bookends of learning." Some examples of projects recently completed by students in the capstone course include the research and development of a program to assist homeless veterans, an analysis or transitional housing programs for single women, and the creation of a computerized database for Cleveland area artists.

In our efforts to teach an interdisciplinary core, we too often tend to work independently to integrate disciplines and different approaches to learning in our syllabi and courses. As a result of our collaboration on this paper and the project to unite the goals of FOLD and UC 110, we feel we have ourselves become more

active agents for change in the classroom, across the curriculum, and beyond the university's walls.

We also believe that the introduction of on-line research techniques has tremendous implications for use in our interdisciplinary core, as well as in other academic courses. In our Global Awareness course, for example, students are utilizing the on-line network known as Peacenet to research the status and conditions of refugees in the global landscape: legal and illegal immigrants, the internally displaced and disappeared, and labor migrants. For us, this is a major step forward in accessing up-to-date information and allowing students to develop global perspectives. Instead of just reading or theorizing from a textbook, students can now partake in hundreds of on-line, current conferences, which engage them immediately as individuals and as participants in a community of activists, journalists, and other students who raise similar global questions.

We believe our efforts to connect learning and activist goals in our adult degree program are creating significant meaning and challenges for both faculty and students. By emphasizing connections at personal, community and academic levels, and by connecting learners with information sources that directly communicate the facts of immediate realities, we hope to provide our students and ourselves with opportunities to make a difference in the lives of many.

Leadership with the Self, Through the World, Into the Future: Excellence in Education for Adult Learners

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There are lots of ways of talking about leadership and lots of people talking about it. Definitions abound. In this paper with the ungainly title (it should have been "Leadership for the 21st Century"!), I will discuss three perspectives on leadership that relate to people like us in alternative higher education:

1. A view of leadership as the people who create or who help bring new ideas into being. This view differs from those which place their attention on major political or corporate or visible positional leaders. Here the focus lies the "Sourcers"—those who create new ideas—and the "Bridgers"—those who make bridges as they go back and forth between new ways of thinking and established modes of doing things.
2. An inclusive model of leadership that should be useful to leaders and for leadership development.
3. A brief attempt to relate this work to Kegan's theory of adult development.

I choose to discuss leadership as I do because the view I am proposing applies to what we in nontraditional higher education have been trying to do and are continuing to do, although our "new" ideas are becoming increasingly mainstream. I will suggest that we ask ourselves a number of questions about our current activities and future directions. Asking questions like these, of course, exemplifies excellence in leadership in any arena.

Leadership

Leadership can be seen as the ability to embody a set of beliefs, values, and principles and to utilize experiences and skills that allow a person to chart a course for him or herself and others. Understanding the essential elements of envisioning where we want to go and having the skills to get people there represent key aspects of what leadership is about, along with necessary crucial personal qualities such as trust and integrity. Thus, from this perspective, leadership is not necessarily so much about visible high-profile leaders as those who, like most of us in alternative education, hold a set of beliefs, exercise certain skills, and chart or keep the boat on course.

People who are the leaders in this way are comprised of two kinds. Both Sourcers and Bridgers influence ideas and reframe

the way we think about things. While Sourcers originate ideas, such as Deming with his concepts about total quality management, Bridgers are the people who bring new ideas back into the establishment and effect change there. Deming's ideas did not take hold in the United States, but in Japan he found Bridgers who applied them to their workplace. Only after that had happened did Bridgers from the United States bring Deming's ideas back from Japan and institute them here.

An example of a Bridger is Dr. Oz. A hotshot cardiothoracic surgeon at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, he is combining the techniques of medical science with those of holistic medicine, using hands-on healers during surgery and afterwards to hasten his patients' recovery after open heart surgery (New York Times Magazine, July 30, 1995). Himself a bridger of cultures, Dr. Oz is a Turkish American who has taken the risk of thinking differently about disease, with freedom from the established framework of medical science to allow "new" techniques in his practice.

Leadership exists at every segment of the bridge, as the case of Dr. Oz demonstrates. He is moving ideas from one level of acceptance to another. Working within the establishment, the Bridgers are the ones who take a risk and make a foray forward into the new. They then bring back, building a bridge behind them, the best parts of what they found across the river, incorporating into the establishment the aspects of the new that it will tolerate. (Of course, Sourcers and Bridgers may be one and the same person.)

For us in alternative higher education, we have long been Bridgers, taking new concepts and instituting them in accredited (for the most part) colleges and universities. We have been talking about student-centered learning, for example, for a long time. Or distance education. We have been going back and forth, back and forth, over the bridge, putting something new into place, often besieged, usually underfunded, until the establishment catches on (and catches up), moving innovations away from the periphery and into the main arena. We have been seeing this kind of activity happen recently with distance education, for example, which has become the hot issue of the late 1990's.

The Leadership Model

Let us return to the initial premise, that leadership can be seen as the ability to embody a set of beliefs, values, and principles and to utilize experiences and skills that allow a person to chart a course for him or herself and others. From this perspective, three aspects of leadership

come into play. First, a person needs to know who he or she

is and what she stands for: beliefs, values, principles, purpose, direction. As Kouzes and Posner (1987) state, leadership begins with the self and is, in fact, a process of self development. Reflective thinking, confidence, and credibility, are necessary components of self-management, the core of being a good leader. In addition, Terry (1993) discusses courage as a quality that leaders need to cultivate. This is the "who" of leadership: the personal and self-governance qualities of the person who is leading.

But it does not do much good if a person walks around with well-thought out beliefs, values, principles, purpose, and direction but does nothing about them. Leadership without context means nothing. He or she needs to effect some change in the external environment, that is, to use the beliefs, values, and principles along with management, organizational, and motivational skills to get things done and have an impact on the world. This area represents the "stuff" that most leadership programs consist of—the doing part of leadership. It is the "how, what, and where" of leadership: how the work gets done, what gets done, and where.

Leadership without direction also means nothing. Leaders lead their followers toward something—a vision, a mission, a goal. This is the "why" of leadership. Leaders need to imagine the future, both for the organization that they are working in and for its place and potential in the world. This third piece, then, has to do with embracing and utilizing the imaginal dimension of our natures which seeks to articulate and give form to those images that work deep in our psyche, beyond the rational, the cognitive, the clear and controlled. As Emily Dickinson puts it, "The Possible's slow fuse is lit/By the Imagination," telling us that imagining things being otherwise than they are may be a first step towards acting as though we can change them. The imagination's capacity to make order out of chaos and to open experience to the mysterious and strange (Warnock, 1978) gives the leader invaluable information for envisioning the new. As Greene says, "the role of the imagination is not to resolve, not to point the way, not to improve. It is to awaken, to disclose the ordinarily unseen, unheard, and unexpected" (p. 28, 1995). Thus, the imagination adds a capacity to the skills a leader needs—the capacity to see and think differently from the way things were seen or thought about before. Interestingly, while the literature on leadership does address visioning as a skill that leaders need to be able to use, it does not discuss the imagination, except brief mention in Covey, 1992, which includes the complex perceptual processes that are the precursor to vision.

The model that I propose includes the three aspects of leadership discussed above. Let us return one more time to the ini-

tial premise, **that leadership can be seen as the ability to embody a set of beliefs, values, and principles and to utilize experiences and skills that allow a person to chart a course for him or herself and others**, and this time use the pieces to establish a model. *Embodying a set of beliefs, values, principles* represents the SELF, that is, the person who is the leader and his or her self-knowledge and self-governance. It is the "embodying" that we need to pay attention to here—the leader is and does the beliefs and values. *Utilizing experiences and skills* relates to the action part of the model. This is the WORLD or the context in which the leader uses his or her various skills and abilities to make something happen *for and with others*. Without the others, there is no leadership; as many people have indicated, there is no leadership without followers. Finally, *charting a course* represents the FUTURE or the direction which the leader is heading, guided, according to this model at least, partly by the imagination. See the table below.

Charting the Course: A Leadership Model©

Leadership	self: with the self	world: through the world	future: into the future
leadership focus:	the self, inside, interiority, *internal processes*	the world, external surroundings, *efficacious actions*	the future, out front, *course charting*
questions to be addressed:	WHO? Who is this person who is the leader? OR Who am I? What are my values, what do I believe in?	HOW? WHAT? WHERE? How or where is the leadership being done? What is being done?	WHY? Why are we going in the direction we are going?
thinking skills:	reflective thinking	critical thinking	creative thinking
abilities:	insight	inquiry	imagination
leadership tasks:	*ability to know and govern the self* reflecting, being ethical, acting with sense of one's own purpose	*ability to make things happen* doing, acting; management, organizational, and motivational skills, make decisions, handle complexity, etc.	*ability to imagine things other than as they are* creating, envisioning, futuring

The table indicates in graphic fashion some of the dimensions of leadership that we have been discussing. Leadership focus refers to what kinds of activities are taking place where. The firs' is the self and a person's own internal processes. Leaders need to have developed character, to have integrity and other virtues such as courage and empathy, as well as to know what aspects of self they need to work on or what may derail them,

such as impatience or intolerance or anger. Further, leaders need to have developed a sense of purpose and direction that will guide them in their actions. While the Self represents what is going on internally, the World stands for the externalized activities in the areas where leaders are making things happen, for example, urging a department to use on-line courses. With the Future, leaders are imagining what can be different or how to bring back what is useful and new from those who dream wild dreams, not only from the short-term needs of their organization but also for the long-term scheme of things. For example, a student centered focus to learning seems to fit better with the decentralization of learning that is currently happening with increased information access than the old teacher-tell-me method. A savvy leader would recognize this major trend and encourage more facilitation of learning in his or her institution or classroom.

A different kind of thinking skill is attached to each section. For the Self, leaders need reflective thinking skills (see Taylor and Marienau, 1995, for sections on journaling and reflective development; Holly, 1987, on journal writing; Schon, 1983, on reflection in action; Brookfield, 1990, on using reflection in the classroom; Leider, 1993, on purpose and self-management.) For World, they need to be able to think critically, examining assumptions, developing contextual awareness, and exploring alternatives (Brookfield, 1987). For the Future, they need to be able to use the imagination (Greene, 1995, Moore, 1992) in order to think of what is better than what we already have.

The leadership tasks also relate to each section: Self, World, Future. Using reflective thinking I as a leader will be developing the ability to know and govern myself. Critical thinking will help me analyze situations and get done what I want to get done. Creative or imaginative thinking allows me to envision alternative futures.

Relationship to Kegan's Model

Because of space limits I will be able to spend only a little time on this topic, and I am assuming some basic knowledge. (The workshop will contain more information on this area.) In Kegan's developmental model, people move through different stages or orders of consciousness, as he calls them, each including and going beyond the previous one. The orders of conscious fit within three mental models, the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern. It is my contention that it is the task of leaders to help people and therefore the society to move from the traditional model into the modern, and even to look ahead, as some Sourcers and Bridgers are doing, to the requirements and demands of the postmodern. In his work, Kegan questions the

goodness of fit between the demands of the modern world and our mental preparation and ability to deliver as needed. He posits that the developmental stage that most of us have attained is not sufficient for the demands of modern life. Hence, it is the task of leaders to articulate what these demands are and to act as Bridgers to help people get there.

Kegan's Orders of Consciousness and World Views

Traditional World	Modern World	Postmodern World
Second order of consciousness	Fourth order of consciousness	Fifth order of consciousness
Third order of consciousness		

Conclusion

We have examined a perspective on leadership that focuses more on the originators (Sourcers) or perpetrators (Bridgers) of new thought than on positional leaders of great authority. We have looked at a model of leadership that includes the person's internal processes and self-governance (Self), the person's efficacious actions in bringing about change in the external environment (World), and his or her ability to use the imagination to see things other than as they are: to awaken, to disclose, and to make connections (Future). Finally, we have taken a moment to relate these ideas to the work of Robert Kegan, positing that leaders need to understand the demands of the world today and to imagine its future in order to bring people along with them to a more desirable state of affairs.

How do these ideas relate to excellence in education? As I said at the outset, we educators, especially those of us in alternative higher educational programs, need to ask ourselves a number of questions. Where are the sources of new ideas? Who are the Bridgers? Are we still Bridgers or has our position been usurped? When some of our alternative ideas become mainstream, what then will we bridge? As leaders who are Sourcers or Bridgers, have we developed pretty good self-management? How efficaciously do we act in our work environment? Can we free up our imaginations to see things as other than they are and

move towards desirable futures? Are we continuing to chart the course for adult higher education? Are we anticipating the needs of the modern and postmodern worlds and working with others to move in that direction?

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Making Excellence, Possible: Contextualized Learning and Praxis

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Attention to social context is an essential element of excellence in adult education. Learning occurs within a social and a political context; recognizing and addressing the context within which learners live and work is essential to designing relevant adult learning experiences. Also, it is the thesis of the authors that contextualized learning is transformational. Deeper than the immediate reward of applying knowledge to one's work life, the intentional and conscious contextual embedding of knowledge connects learning to one's life in an inescapable way. Praxis is presented here as an approach to contextualizing learning. Shor's (1992) teaching strategies are also proposed to enhance contextualized learning and frame a context for teaching that strives for excellence. Two course examples of contextualized learning offered to adult learners follow an elaboration of the model.

The model

As a way to contextualize adult learning, praxis is an ongoing process of moving between text or theory, application, reflection, and back to theory (Freire, 1985, 1994; Willets, Boyce & Franklin, 1994, 1995). As a metamodel, praxis places individuals in organizational and societal contexts and draws attention to the iterative process of consciousness, practice, and reflection. A brief discussion of each of these processes follows.

Consciousness, practice, and reflection form a cycle that can be applied to individual learning as well as to the learning of a group. The cycle begins with consciousness. Much has been written about consciousness; however, it can be said that consciousness includes awareness of contextual and environmental influences, of one's emotions and actions, and the actions of others. In work that speaks to adult learning, Freire (1984, 1994) identifies literacy and dialogue as essential to consciousness and Shor (1992) identifies dialogue and writing as the fundamental vehicles for the development of critical consciousness.

Practice is iterative as one's level of skill is assessed, skills

that will increase one's effectiveness are identified, and these new skills are acquired and practiced. Reflective practice means being at work in the world, evaluating and reflecting on the results of one's practice, and engaging again in practice. Engaging in this cycle necessitates an ability to reflect-being able to identify what one needs, to think about one's behavior, to assess the results of the behavior, to construct alternatives to the behavior that might increase effectiveness, and to act again. The classic work on reflective practice is Schon's (1987) volume, The reflective practitioner. Reflective practice is a life-long activity and establishes a foundation for individual learning and constructive change.

Praxis is an approach to contextualizing learning that challenges learners and faculty to reflect on their roles and actions as participant/members of families, organizations, cultures, and societies. Consciousness precedes contextualized learning; dialogue precedes collective learning. The central ideas are (1) we are changed by that which we deeply engage and (2) learning is transformational as the connections between text, environment, experience, and reflective practice are woven.

Strategies and skills for contextualized learning

Even though adult learners revel in the immediate and the practical, and faculty adjust their theory-based courses to accommodate the preferences of adult learners, it is the challenge of adult learning faculty to take learners beyond immediate application to analysis of social context and reflective practice as professionals in society.

The essential strategies of contextualized learning include dialogue, praxis, critical reflection, and acquisition of new knowledge in cyclical and collaborative relationships with others. Well applied in one's teaching style, these strategies can form the basis of achieving excellence in the classroom.

The model in practice

Two courses will be considered in an attempt to ground the model in the experience of the authors. One is a course in statistics and the other is a course in organization behavior. In the statistics course, the traditional use of problem sets for grounding the students' practice of theory was abandoned. Instead, the problem set, unified and used throughout the course, was drawn from the US Census data for the communities in which the learners lived. Using a variety of socioeconomic data supplied on CD-ROM by the US Census Bureau, the teachers presented the students with data on 3.5-inch floppy disks formatted for use in and Excel and Word. Students supplemented the US Census data with community-acquired data from such sources as the city governments, the Chambers of Commerce, the School Districts,

and other data sources that occurred to the learners.

The statistics class was team-taught by faculty whose disciplines were psychology and economics. Part-time faculty were invited to attend as observers. Learners were placed in groups of three, each group comprising a census region (a city in Los Angeles County). They engaged the data from the perspectives of local government, a business entity, and a social service agency. They were asked to "describe their community" on the basis of the data provided and obtained using standard statistical methods introduced by the data and the dialogue it generated in small and large group discussion. Faculty were consultants and advisors, offering criticism and making suggestions. Finally, the learners "made inferences" from the data about new community services, new business opportunities, and new social service needs.

Two stories express the breadth of teaching and learning as well as the struggles of faculty to expand their notions of both. Early in the course, a student indicated she had learned more about her community in two weeks of the class than she had learned in her lifetime as a resident of 45 years. To back up her statement, she produced her learning journal citing experiences, data, conversations, readings, and their meanings to her learning. In the face of this powerful evidence, a visiting faculty inquired, "Yes, but can she compute a standard deviation?"

The second experience: co-instructors had an interdisciplinary dialogue about the use and meaning of statistics while the learners perceived that faculty were unsure of the "right" answer. The instructors identified three responses to a computed test statistic in a simple decision model using at-score. The instructors' responses emerged from their own disciplines, viz, psychology, economics, and engineering. Each had a different interpretation of the result. In the minds of the instructors, this illustrated the power of an interdisciplinary approach to learning and teaching statistics. However, the students believed the instructors did not really understand the problem or that they had insufficient training in statistics because they could not agree on a single answer. Learners wondered about the competency of the teachers.

In the second course example, undergraduate organization behavior, the application of praxis and contextualized learning began with a self-assessment of group and interpersonal skills, and learners were challenged to identify the aspect(s) of organization behavior in which they had the most interest and the aspects with which they wrestled at work. From the first session, learners verbalized and wrote about the connections between the theories of human behavior and the day-to-day contexts in which they work.

Following are three experiences cited briefly to illustrate the

praxis in which learners and faculty were engaged. One, an early class dialogue about diversity and respect in organizations was resumed again when the class considered the implications of attribution and perception in co-worker and management-employee interactions. Two, a course assignment on organizational problem- solving began with perspective-taking in problem identification and considering the ways in which naming a situation shapes the resolutions or interventions considered. Three, a faculty member weighed verbally with a class tradition of "covering" material against time consuming and yet, dynamic, classroom dialogues that seek and express the application of ideas and values by learners in the workplace. Together, they agreed that out-of-class readings would provide the content base so that class time could focus on the dialogue and exchange they valued.

It is the experience of the authors that it is worth the struggle and effort to learn new ways as we engage powerful challenges to the old model that sees the teacher as the dispenser of knowledge, telling learners exactly what they need to do to earn a grade for the class so they can ultimately graduate and move on with their lives. In the contexts of our lives and our experiences as teachers, we embrace a praxis model that contextualizes learning. We believe the model will yield richer and transformational results. We believe this model requires different skills than simply being well-grounded in one's discipline. The essential skills that follow require that one be well-grounded in one's discipline but also illustrate that being well-grounded in one's discipline is insufficient.

Essential skills for teaching

Shor (1992: 112) identifies seven personal competencies teachers need and which the authors believe underpin contextualized learning and teaching processes. These are: 1) conceptual habits of mind; 2) the capacity to do classroom research; 3) the ability to listen carefully to students and to include them in reflecting on the dialogue underway; 4) skill in group dynamics; 5) verbal creativity in posing problems for discussion; 6) commitment to democracy that includes sharing authority with students; and 7) allowing students' themes, understandings, and cultural diversity to co-develop the curriculum.

Many of these skills are not new to educators and thinkers. The idea that we need to be intentional in our focus on them and that we need to practice them and that we need to expose them to the critical eye of our students and of our colleagues is new to many faculty. That they are skills implies we can develop them and become better at them with practice and reflection (praxis). Exposing our level of skill to others requires us to dialogue, to

suspend our own ideas and beliefs to the extent necessary for us to change, adapt, learn, and re-apply. It is the process that allows faculty and learners to making learning meaningful, real, important, continual, and contextual.

Conceptual habits of mind

Conceptual habits of mind are those habits of critical thought that engage the world in more than a superficial way. Seeing persons, places, and things in relationship and developing methodology of inquiry reflect this skill. To share what one sees and believes with others in a way that respects difference is basic to this skill. Developing habits of mind requires attention to those corollary personality traits that maximize the developmental potential. These include humility, listening carefully, observing critically, admitting mistakes, taking joy in learning, looking for the hidden, respecting difference, tolerating and valuing change, tolerating and valuing conflict.

The capacity to do classroom research

Conducting classroom research is easy and simple. That it is so easy and simple leads many to believe they do it continually. Among the resources for classroom research is a book written by K Patricia Cross and Thomas Angelo (1993). One of the many benefits of this resource is its cross-referenced guide to techniques. The guide simplifies data gathering around learning in ways that are intentional, consistent, anonymous, and learner-centered.

Classroom research is an essential component of excellence and allows the teacher to respond to learner concerns in immediate and long-term ways. Subsequent classes can benefit from the learning experiences of current ones through the improvement in teaching and learning that results from the data. Teaching improvement implies that the teacher learns. An environment where learning and teaching improve suggests a path to excellence.

Listening carefully to students & including them in the dialogue underway

Listening carefully to students allows the teacher to identify the topics and themes that connect the lives of learners to the agenda of the course. This is skill focuses on the learner rather than the teacher. It takes an educator with listening skills to hear the ways in which learners stimulate the direction and content of the class. This is a hard listening. It is a listening that seeks information that shapes the contours of the course content and concepts. This means the same course takes on different forms with different learners. It may imply that the same course has different learning outcomes. If this is so, the teacher must pay close attention to the class syllabus and the process of

delivering content. The teacher must respond to opportunities that change direction and increase learning.

Skill in group dynamics

Learning is a group process as much as an individual process. The learners' experiences and contexts challenge the teacher to understand and use group dynamics to enhance the effectiveness of learning. Teachers often say the diversity of learning readiness in the classroom is too great. Slow students are overwhelmed and fast students are bored. Placing learning in the context of the learners, making learning a collaborative and group process, placing a value on difference and using it to generate the concepts and content of the course, makes the learning process everyone's responsibility in ways that make demands on all of the students all of the time. This skill is desperately needed by faculty who themselves become overwhelmed by difference.

Verbal creativity in posing problems for discussion

Springing from the generative themes of the learners, a teacher is challenged to present problems to the class for discussion in language that stimulates and challenges the learners. This may not always be in the idiom of the dominant language. Here the teacher is challenged by the politics of language and the expectation of communication in the dominant language form. This requires creativity in language that many teachers do not possess and have to develop. The teacher can improve this skill through the creative use of classroom research and colleague criticism. The teacher can also improve this skill through experience of and the involvement in the culture of the learners. The use of technology can be helpful here. Videotaping and/or audiotaping classroom discourse can offer the teacher a rich and valuable source for reflection and learning. Inviting the learners to rephrase and reshape the content and form of the questions for learning can stimulate participation.

Commitment to democracy that includes sharing authority

A commitment to classroom democracy is often a difficult and fearful process for teachers. Allowing learners to critique and reshape the syllabus is essential to effective learning. If we listen, we can hear that resistance to learning can spring from the feeling of alienation and separation from control of the content. Resistance to learning perhaps most often generates from this lack of control over one's own life. If we believe that learners do not have sufficient knowledge to determine the content of a course, then we miss the point that learning is not as much about acquiring content as it is about applying the learning outcomes to the context of the learners' lives. In this sense, excellence is stifled and learning is minimal or perhaps does not occur.

Allowing students' themes, understandings & cultural diver-

sity to co-develop the curriculum

When we come to accept the role and value of context in learning, teachers not only allow but encourage students' themes, understandings, and cultural diversity to co-develop the curriculum. Here the teacher faces the greatest challenge to his or her creativity. Depending on the class, its homogeneity or heterogeneity, the class takes on a particular style. The politics of the classroom are challenging and unique. Co-developing curriculum invites and necessitates the participation of learners. We are drawn back to the heart of what teachers hope for their students. What happens when the course is over and the learning community disbands? What do we hope for learners when they are no longer in our class? We hope that these learners will contribute to the greater society. Yet, it is not our hopes alone that shape the direction of teaching and learning. We work in collaboration with the hopes, aspirations, and outcomes desired by learners.

The heart of contextualized learning

These seven skills lie at the heart of contextualized learning and of the learning process. It is the responsibility of the teacher to determine where the intersections of the process engage the content of the discipline. That the intersections exist is unconvincing unless the educator learns to look for them and tries to apply them. A plethora of current literature about learning and teaching embrace the notions presented here. Inspiring examples of contextualized learning occur in academic programs with mature learners. These learners come to class with the expectations for application to the experiences of their lives and in the communities where they live. This is not a demand to arbitrarily reduce theory to practice. It is an expectation for contextualized relevance that places new requirements on the teacher and on the learning experience.

The teaching practices presented here are challenging to the authors and central to our reflective practices. We do not believe there is one way to learn. We are amazed by the difference that confronts us each time we offer a class. What worked in the past does not always work in the present. Yet the possibility for success seems to us to be linked to how we view and value the learners that come to us. We regard it as a particularly sterile experience if we have not brought something new away from each encounter. We are challenged and overwhelmed by the resistance that we encounter among learners who merely want us to tell them what to do, what to study, how to get the grade. When contextualized learning becomes the goal then teaching takes on a new and different texture. We experience a range of emotions while teaching: excitement, disappointment, success, failure, discovery, resistance, joy, pain. At the same time, we are en-

gaged in the exciting prospect of teaching and learning in the context of excellence and trusting the human processes of interaction, dialogue, and discovery.

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TEACHING

A Competency Model for Instructors in Adult Higher Education: A Work in Progress

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Introduction

The evolving model identifies success factors for instructors of adults in higher education. The project was initiated to develop a long term, coherent faculty development program. Like many programs for adults in higher education, the faculty in the School of Management at Lesley College have differing experiences and overall effectiveness with the program, adult learners and teaching. Both full-time and adjunct faculty teach in the program. These variations make any faculty development activity difficult and often less effective.

The model will provide the success factors for the role (adult higher education instructor). This will provide the School of Management a conceptual model which allows the faculty to have their strengths assessed and identify needs for further development. A full conceptual model will allow faculty development to be more individualized and delivered through a variety of modalities. While the model was initiated to improve faculty development, it has other uses.

Background

Competency models are currently quite popular in the business environment. They are developed both for generic positions and company and position specific roles (Boyatzis, 1982). Competency models are used to hire, assess, develop and evaluate individuals. They are also used to identify competence (skills, knowledge and/or attitudes) which an organization must develop. The latter has made them popular in the current volatile and changing business environment.

Competency models attempt to identify the competencies of a particular role which produce desired performance, outcomes or results. Competency models document values, knowledge, skills and behaviors which successful role incumbents exhibit. This is usually done by collecting data on high performers. Data can be collected through observation, interviews and surveys.

The concept was developed by David McClelland (McClelland,

1976). It has since been popularized and applied by many authors. Bases has recently applied the model to curriculum development in higher education (Bases, 1994). Only one competency study of adult higher education instructors was found in the literature (Kastendiek, et al. 1981). This study is dated. The training profession which is related to adult higher education has a long tradition of competency studies. The Ontario Society for Training and Development originally published a study in 1976 and updated that study in 1979 and 1981 (see Suessmuth & West, 1987). The American Society of Training and Development published a study in 1983 and updated that study in 1989 (see McLaga, 1989).

Process

There are a number of variations of the competency modeling process currently in use. The model used here is a modification based on the privileged position of the model builders and access to a wider audience of expert role incumbents. The privilege of the model builders is that through many years each of experience in the field, numerous teaching observations and reading of student evaluations they had informally collected an incredible amount of data prior to embarking on the study. This prior knowledge clearly shaped the model and process.

The process used is an eight step process as outlined figure 1. The first step was based on the previously mentioned experience of the model builders. Through discussion and reflection they articulated the beginning of the conceptual model. This model served as the beginning point of the second step which was an interview/discussion with a panel of six experts. These experts were chosen because they both represented an "excellent instructor" and were also in a position that they had data beyond their own experience. The experts were also recruited to help collect data from a larger group of role incumbents (faculty). The group of approximately sixty faculty represented the breadth of experience and effectiveness previously described. In small groups facilitated by the role experts the faculty were asked to identify success factors for instructors in School of programs. It is important to note that with both the expert panel and role incumbents dialogue was used as opposed to individual interviews or surveys. The dialogue was proceeded by individual reflection which was a structured activity with the role incumbents. It is believed by the authors that the combination of reflection and dialogue led to richer, truer data. Also important is the fact that the terms competency or any behavioral terminology which is common in competency models was not used. It was felt this may limit the discussion or divert the discussion to a philosophi-

cal disagreement. While the competency methodology usually results in observable behaviors, McClelland began the work as an alternative to testing. It usually collects data which gives a profile of the role including values, attitudes and beliefs. Competency model data is usually rich and has many levels critical to success. With this data a refined model will be developed. The authors will then test the reliability of the model by correlating it to faculty evaluations, success and self assessment. The predictive reliability of the model will be tested long term.

Results

Steps one through four are complete. The draft of the model is developed and attached (see figure 2). The results contain little surprise for experienced adult educators. The model tells us the ideal instructor knows the context and can apply it, respect individual students, has a process orientation, applies learning theory and is a learner. These success factors have a high degree of fit with the McBer study results (see figure 3). The results show an increased emphasis on content, applications of content and the instructor as learner. While the success factors are in line with experience and research, the outcomes for these factors presented a little more challenge. The role incumbents presented items from the most global to the most detailed (e.g. brings chalk to class). All outcomes could be included under the success factors. However, representing the total configuration in a useful way was difficult. The outcomes need more work so they adequately describe the success factor and differentiate among instructor performance.

The process of using groups of role incumbents after personal reflection was in itself fruitful. Participants reported they gained a better understanding of their own teaching and learned from the discussion. This seemed particularly true of less experienced faculty.

Discussion

The process has resulted in a model of five success factors which articulate a coherent approach to instruction of adults. The success factors represent not only behavior but also attitudes and values of the instructor. As previously mentioned, the outcomes need further data collection and refinement.

This model can be used to fulfill its original purpose of developing a comprehensive faculty development program. Training activities can be developed for each success factor. Faculty can be assessed and trained in the success factors in which they need development. It is important to note, that training activities are not necessarily classroom activities and some factors will re-

quire more times to be developed.

The model also can be used to assess potential new faculty and evaluate current faculty. These uses will be available after the reliability tests have been completed.

The experience tells us faculty learn from reflection and dialogue about their practice. The model can be a tool for self-assessment and structured discussions about teaching. This use will be piloted during the academic year 1995-1996.

With all of this input the authors built a draft model. The model identifies "success factors" which are more global concepts that organize the ioutcomesi which are behaviors that one exhibits to demonstrate a success factor. The model is currently only general to Lesley Collegeis School of Management. The broader sample will test the concept of a more general model.

The next steps will be to have the success factors and the draft model reviewed by a larger group of experts at the ACE/ Alliance conference. Then a national sample of both role incumbents and experts will be surveyed to identify the outcomes which are most descriptive of the success factors.

Figure 1

The Steps in the Process

1) Articulate Previous Experience of Model Builders
2) Interview Expert Panel
3) Input of Role Incumbents
4) Draft Model
5) Review of Model by New Expert Panel
6) Survey of Wider Sample of Incumbents
7) Refine Model
8) Test Reliability

Figure 2

Success Factors

-Content Knowledge
- Provides Usable Resources
-Establishes Credibility
-Relates Knowledge to Action
-Knows Subject Matter

-Respect for Individual Adult as Learner
-Perceived as Accessible
-Emphasis on Learning (Not Teaching)
-Respects Individual Differences of Students
-Empathetic Toward Studentsi Lives

-Process Orientation
-Facilitates Process
-Creates Community of Learners
-Provides Structure to Learning Experience

-Applies Learning Theory
-Integrates Studentsi Experiences
-Fosters Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Independence
-Links Theory and Practice
-Gives Continuous Feedback
-Sets High Standards
-Creates Clear Expectations
-Integrates Theory and Practice

-Presents Self as Learner
-Collaborates
-Has Self Knowledge and is Secure
-Is Flexible
-Welcomes Challenges and Other Opinions
-Exhibits Enthusiasm for Learning

Figure 3

Competency Clusters
(McBer, 1981)

Student Centered Orientation
- Has Positive Expectations of Students
- Attends to Student Concerns

Humanistic Learning Orientation
- Values the Learning Process
- Views Specialized Knowledge as a Resource

Creates a Context Conducive to Adult Learning
- Works to Understand Studentsi Frames of Reference
- Works to Establish Mutuality and Rapport
- Holds Students Accountable to their Best Learning Interests

Grounds the Learning Process in an Analysis of Student Needs
- Actively Seeks Information About Students
- Diagnoses
- Prescribes Action

Facilitates the Learning Process
- Links Pedagogy to Studentsi Concerns
- Links Process to Desired Learning Outcomes
- Adapts to Situational Demands
- Responds to Non-verbal Cues

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The Teaching Portfolio: An Individual Creation

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What is the purpose of a teaching portfolio? Why should anyone bother with it? What purposes do portfolios serve and what advantages do they offer?

The Teaching Portfolio represents a faculty member's work (thinking, decision-making, design, delivery, dissemination) in reference to TEACHING in ways that are similar to the those that have been used by artists, designers, and photographers to represent the style, depth and breadth of their work. It is a summary of a professor's best work, major accomplishments, strengths, self reflections, special course materials, (iterations of syllabi with reasons for redesign), and the opinions and assessments by others of his/her work. It is to a professor's teaching what lists of publications, presentations, grants and academic honors are to scholarship. (AAHE, 1991)

Ernest Boyer argues in Scholarship Revisited that universities need to rethink the "scholarship of teaching", and in doing so become alerted to its documentation and inclusion in the reward structure. (Boyer, 1991) The American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) created a "Teaching Initiative Task Force" with the charge of improving teaching, informing its documentation, and assisting universities in the effort to claim the scholarship of teaching through effective documentation. (AAHE, 1991) In the spirit of this initiative and what K. Pat Cross labels the movement to "take teaching seriously", the teaching portfolio has emerged in the traditional and non-traditional sectors of higher education as both a tool for the formation and a document for the evaluation and VALUATION of teaching excellence.

This article is designed to be an INTRODUCTION to portfolio development. While references will be made to the purposes, uses, politics and institutional implications, the PRIMARY FOCUS of this article will concentrate on developing an individual creation that represents the faculty member's personality and practices. This article will:

1. Present an overview of the portfolio and its use;
2. Describe the contents of the portfolio;
3. Offer suggestions for the format;
4. Begin the process of reflection and documentation;

Background

Previously the way to "present" teaching effectiveness been through the results of evaluations which are now called (PC term) "student opinion of instructor performance" instruments, and through peer evaluations. If in fact, we are placing a renewed (or first time) emphasis on teaching excellence in our institutions, then we need a means of documenting and demonstrating competence and excellence that does not rely solely on opinions or is not colored by politics. In addition, if we are placing importance on student learning then we need an equivalent (to how we assess scholarship) and integratous method for assessing and evaluating success and achievement in this area for the purposes of retention, tenure and promotion.

If we are able to both achieve this and gain its acceptance into the mainstream reward structure, in some cases faculty who are designing their "life plans" in the profession may choose to have more emphasis placed on their teaching and less on traditional scholarship. The portfolio can enable them to show that their research has been in the "field" of their classrooms, and their dissemination occurs in the "grounded theory application and evaluation loop" that ends up back in the classroom. They are gathering, analyzing and applying data continuously in an active way with a theoretical base and premise to improve and change what they HAVE been doing and to advance the learning of their students.

But whether for a life's work or as a piece of documentation of one aspect of the faculty role, the portfolio then is analogous to the reporting of practice-based research and demonstrates the iterative and formative improvement of the professional development of the faculty member's work in teaching as well as her creative interventions throughout the course of her courses or work with students. It also contains her self reflections about the intentionality of WHY she is doing WHAT she is doing.

This can create fear (at first) in those who are operating totally on the lecture-discussion-multiple choice test model of instruction. If one is totally content-based or has no variation in delivery (teach the way you have been taught) then this process is threatening and confusing.

In addition, the moment that a department decides to include the teaching portfolio as a part of the documentation of faculty accomplishments, it is asking faculty to take on an enormous piece of additional workload—especially in the beginning when the original guidelines and structure for the portfolio are being formed. THE ADMINISTRATION MUST COMPENSATE with release from something—a course, or committee, because when this is required it takes time to document and create. It adds to

classroom preparation time as well because faculty are bring asked to:

...reflect on their teaching
...on what effect it has had
...on what their desired outcomes were
...on what they designed to achieve them with the students;
...on how they can achieve them more effectively
...and on what they need to know and do to achieve them, AND

...if they don't know HOW, then they need to go find out-which gets them into a new set of "theories' and dialogue about their teaching with others. Shifting the emphasis to student learning automatically adds a secondary underlying discipline (the processes of learning) to everything that one does. This "discipline" will be described further in the section of this article on "contents and self-reflections".

If a portfolio, then, is a profile of a faculty member's "student contact life", **how can this be presented in a way that is succint yet comprehensive, accurately portrays the teaching competence/excellence of the faculty member, and still includes elements that have been traditionally used and accepted to evaluate teaching effectiveness?**

Content

A well balanced portfolio will contain :

1. Personal Philosophy and Goals;
2. The Assessments and Opinions of Others;
3. "Hard Copy" Materials;
4. Self Assessment and Reflections;

The content and method of reflection may differ depending on the **purposes** for which the portfolio will be used (formative and/or evaluative). For the purposes of this article we will assume that although essential for **formative development**, the portfolio once assembled usually finds itself used as a part of the evaluation materials for reappointment, promotion and tenure. So rather than being an academic ostrich, we will focus on constructing this document keeping in mind these uses.

The format will differ depending on the discipline, and the sophistication and/or experience levels of those reading and constructing the portfolios. The format also changes as faculty begin to use them—they become more personalized. Over time, individuals who respond to the ideal of teaching development deviate from the "pro forma" instructions and templates and create portfolio that are as unique and creative as their classrooms. But before the artist can emerge, some training in the basics is required. What follows is an introduction into these basics.

Personal Philosophy and Goals

Note: for these proceedings, this section has been edited. This section can be found in the Teaching Portfolio Workbook and is available through Beverly Firestone, author.

Opinions and Assessments of Others

Traditionally the evaluations and opinions of others have been the primary "hard data' on which a faculty member's competence has been determined. While is important to gather and assemble this information, the portfolio enables the faculty member to place these in a context and to supply additional information apart from quantitative scores and standardized forms.

The "opinion/assessment" section contains three elements in both the former and the new suggested means of tracking and assembling this information. These are 1) students; 2) peers; and 3) self; but in the portfolio method, the faculty member retains "control" of he information.

Consider the following two diagrams:

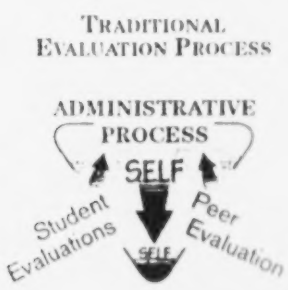

Figure 1

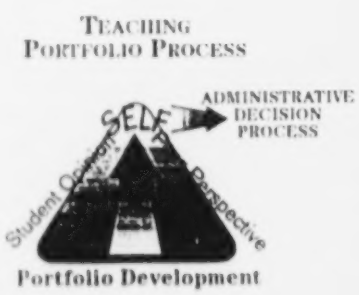

Figure 2

In fig. 1 the evaluations of others are controlling the administrative perceptions of the faculty member's performance. Even the faculty member's own perception is shaped (or broken) by these perceptions. The outside data is controlling the process. In fig. 2, the faculty member creates the context and the boundaries. Student instruments and peer observations are still included, but the instruments are designed to illicit the most relevant information for the department's needs, and the peer observations are a result of a dialogue or on-going relationship of peers with the faculty member's teaching development.

The portfolio method helps to alleviate the erroneous "quantitative comparisons" that are sometimes used when student instruments are tallied and instructors "ranked". While it does offer a summative profile of student opinion, it also offers explanations and balance, and place strength and weakness in a con-

text. While it is important to involve students in the evaluative process, how the instruments are constructed is as important as how they are used.

A task force at DePaul University recently performed a content analysis of all instruments (27) in use at DePaul, compared these to the national literature and standardized forms, and concluded the following. Standardized instruments do not effectively measure faculty performance if the same instrument is used across the entire institution. However, standardized categories do insure that faculty are being assessed with equality. For any given faculty member we need to know student perceptions of:

...their communication skills
...their ability to organize daily classroom activities
...their ability to motivate students
...the perceived fairness of their evaluation procedures
...their ability to establish rapport with students
...their helpfulness and availability to students
...student confidence in the instructor knowledge of the subject
...their impact on student intellectual development and interests, and
...their ability to organize an interesting course, develop interesting assignments, and organize the most effective and interesting resources to further the learning of their students, and meet the course (and departmental) goals and objectives. And such information is only meaningful when it is tracked for all courses over time. Only then can we begin to construct longitudinal profiles that reflect a broader range of pedagogical skills and teaching assignments and functions. (DePaul, 1992)

A department can construct an instrument according to these categories that will illicit more meaningful information from the students, and it should also include opportunities for narrative questions whenever possible. This instrument then provides the information that is part of the "student opinion" arm of fig.2.

Peer evaluation is often uncomfortable and frequently does not provide useable information about faculty performance. Peers tend to "water down" both the exceptional and the poor bringing their written observations into a muddy common ground.(Firestone, 1992) In the national dialogue on the effectiveness of college teaching, peer review has recently received much attention. Those who have written on the subject agree on its value, but only for the formative objectives of the faculty. Peer review can be adopted and any of several levels, and is most useful when it is part of the developmental process. It is most successful when the reviewer approaches the process from a perspective of collegiality, helpfulness, and interest in the colleague's work, rather than from a critical problem-finding perspective.

Participants in the formative process report high satisfaction, more interaction with other faculty members, increased motivation and a renewed interest in teaching.(Firestone/DePaul 1992). The following levels are most conducive to inclusion in teaching portfolio documentation, and interact with the faculty member's portfolio sections on student opinion, course materials and self reflection.

Level 1: Review of syllabi and course materials;

Level 2: (above)
Discussion with faculty member about materials, organization of the course, successful sessions, problem sessions, etc.

Level 3: (all of the above)
Pre-visitation with faculty member about the objectives of the class to be observed, the relationship of the class to the overall course;
Criteria are developed for the observation;
Visitation of class;
Post-visitation with feedback;
AND faculty member sharing self-reflections

Level 4: (all of the above)
Written report is prepared by observer;
Report is given to faculty member;
Observer and faculty member discuss and amend report;

Level 5: (all of the above)
Multiple visitations by same person (or others)
Additional tools are used (taping...)

Level 6; Faculty part of "peer" teams that assess and mentor each other (Firestone, 1992)

The evaluation section of the teaching portfolio, then, documents a **three fold process: Student Opinion, Peer Evaluation and Self Evaluation**, the most important of which is SELF realization about why one does what one does.

Self Reflection and the "Hard-Core" Materials

This section has been editied from the proceedings document. The full Teaching Portfolio Workbook is available through Beverly Firestone, author.

How Do You Begin?

These instructions apply to faculty whose departments and colleges have NOT mandated what to include and how to include it. If one is given the liberty to develop a portfolio that is original and comprehensive, consider the following:

In preparing to develop a portfolio, do not grieve the exer-

cises and experiences that have passed undocumented or have been lost from previous years. Rather, begin now to collect information.

1. Obtain a box or basket;
2. "Toss in" exercises, simulations (with post-it notes)
3. Write journal reflections (5 min) as you leave a successful or challenging class. Toss them in;
4. Include syllabi and assignments and your scribbles and changes; rationale for these changes;

After about 6 months:

1. Pull out these materials and organize/sort them into piles;
2. Give these piles a category, name or theme that best represents their content;
3. Write an abstract or cover sheet for each pile that summarizes its content;
4. Clip them together, put them back in the box;
5. Continue to collect new reflections for another 3 months;

Eventually the form and structure of your teaching themes will emerge, but you must be willing to tolerate the ambiguity until they do. Believe that this developmental process must be permitted to occur if a "personality" of your teaching is to emerge. Focus on the student's and their learning while retaining the rutter of direction that your discipline provides, and this process of documentation will produce that added benefit of improving your instructional effectiveness.

At the end of each year the portfolio is "pulled together" one more time. In this more formal organization, use these assessed teaching materials as data for addressing how well you have achieved the goals that you set for yourself in for the year, AND to assist yourself in setting new goals for the next year.

It is helpful to use iworkbook-likei sheets to help you in the initial assembly and evaluation process that leads you to the development of your first portfolio. The following examples are from such a workbook developed by the author, Beverly

Firestone, of DePaul University. These examples are intended as ihelp sheetsi in the beginning processes pf analysing course content, delivery, change, and rationale.

Workbook Examples

The following documents were designed to assist faculty in the initial iaccumulation and analysisi of course materials. A full set of workbook ihelpi sheets are contained in a Teaching Portfolio Workbook designed by this author.

TEACHING PORTFOLIO COURSE ASSESSMENT

The first time that you construct your portfolio is the hardest and the most time consuming. It is equasive to the very first time that you designed, developed and taught a course—especially one that had never been offered before in your institution. As in course design, research, conceptualization, choices of what to include, and careful construction of the structure and examples to best guide others through the material AND inform them on content —— and then putting it in writing—are all part of the process of portfolio construction and documentation.

There are different ways to begin, but the end point needs to include concepts AND details, general purposes AND examples, and both the WHAT and the WHY of what you do in your design and delivery of learning experiences.

Please do not succumb to the temptation to skip the massive paper-trail collection of stage 1. It is to your advantage to assemble this collection. Like effective research, even though only a percentage may appear in the final document, what you choose will be more representative of your work if you discipline yourself to examine the widest range of what you have done.

Also, themes, ideas or patterns may emerge from examining the iterative and creative aspects of your work that you did not expect (as they may not have been part of your conscious design). Yet these, can be important as you develop your self-reflection statement of your own guiding values and philosophy AND the body of your work will offer a quantitative perspective to your choices and style.

With this in mind then, assemble as much as you can of the following information for each course that you have taught in the past two years. Later, we will discuss how to approach courses that have been (but are not currently) part of your repertoire.

TEACHING PORTFOLIO
INITIAL COURSE SUMMARY

Course Title: _____

_____

Departmental "General"? yes no Required? yes no
Special? Yes no

Level: UG lower UG upper Graduate Special Student
Continuing Education

Departmental "Special" Special Seminar Unique toMe

When did you first teach this course? _____

How many times have you taught this course?_____

Have you taught this course (or a similar one) somewhere
o'her than your current institution?
If yes, where; when; how many times?

GATHER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN ORDER TO ANSWER TO CONSTRUCT THE PORTFOLIO SUMMARY:

1. Current Syllabus; Any and all past syllabi (whether the course changed that term/semester or not)

2. Copies of student opinions of your instruction: department instruments; notes from students; again, any and all information that you have, quantitative and qualitative.

3. Several exercises, simulations and/or in class activities that you have developed AND know to be successful;

4. Exercises, simulations and/or in class activities that you have adapted or used from other sources;

5. Several descriptions (with the handouts that the students receive) of homework assignments and/or course projects.

6. Handouts that describe criteria by which the students will be evaluated; that instruct them on how to approach and complete assignments that you have given them;

7. Several copies of student work with your assessment notes; (the student re-write if applicable)

8. A personal statement (for colleagues) about the purposes of your course with your rationale for your instruction/ facilitation choices AND the process/criteria that you use to assess when your course is "working", when to adapt your methods, and HOW you adapt (during a session and/or in design.

Using Storytelling to Identify Practice-Based Competencies of Advising

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Advising, sometimes to referred to as mentoring, is a complex activity that involves an integration of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values. The complexity is deepened when working with adult learners who bring to their participation in formal education a host of experiences, responsibilities, goals, and emotions. In addition, adults claim knowledge and skills developed and applied in a variety of contexts.

Because advising is primarily a "private" exchange between an advisor and learner, a shared understanding of advising strategies, philosophies, techniques, behaviors, and attitudes, as well as roles and responsibilities of an advisor, may not develop within an academic unit or organization. While regard for the importance of advising as an element of academic success and student retention has been elevated in recent years (Crookston, 1972; O'Banion, 1972; Creamer and Creamer,1994; Shields, 1994), training and professional development of those who advise may be inadequate for quality assurance and improvement. This is particularly true given increases in the number of academic personnel providing advising services to a growing number of adult learners. The assurance and progressive improvement of what learners experience in their advising encounters rests, in part, on a shared understanding of what comprises good advising practices.

One of the problems facing practitioners in the field of adult learning, however, is the adequate translation of the wealth of experience we have accumulated into a descriptive set of effective behaviors. I describe here a process for articulating a set of competencies (i.e., skills, knowledge, and attitudes) derived through a collective examination of the experiences and practices of those who engage in a range of advising activities with adults. An overview of the outcome of the process — a set of advising competencies — is also offered, the specifics of which are detailed elsewhere (Fiddler and Alicea, 1995).

CONTEXT

The process described here was originally applied at the School for New Learning (SNL), one of eight colleges of DePaul University (Chicago). SNL exclusively serves adults (>24 years) through competence-based undergraduate and graduate programs. Several elements of the college's mission and history have led to advising as a central avenue of student learning and devel-

opment: the school's individualized curriculum, the goal of developing self-managed learning, and an ethos of personalism and learning-centeredness. A critical philosophical premise of the college is the belief that the learner is the primary agent of her/his learning and education and that the curriculum is both an outgrowth of that "learner centeredness" and a contributor to it. Against this backdrop, almost any encounter that a member of the college's personnel has with a student, or potential student, has come to be viewed as an advising opportunity. A student may encounter approximately 15 different contexts for advising over the course of her/his involvement with the school. These various contexts include initial inquiry regarding programs or courses, decision-making regarding returning to college and selecting a school, admissions, exploration of educational and professional goals, program and learning plan development, course selection, planning and implementing independent learning activities, preparation for prior or independent learning assessment, major project(s) development, and special services. Students routinely engage in advising interactions with assigned faculty, practitioners in their degree concentration, and an advising staff as well as part-time instructors who teach courses. Additionally, the school also recognizes that exchanges with peers, friends, alumni, family, and community contacts constitute an additional, informal source of advising that adult learners experience. Thus, the merging of these contexts and people forms a complex matrix to describe what a student experiences under the umbrella of "advising," certainly not a unique situation for adult oriented programs.

METHODS

A process is described here, and modeled in the conference workshop, for using the stories of faculty and staff who engage in advising adults. This work was initially developed in working with faculty and staff in the School for New Learning, DePaul University (Chicago) who were invited to a workshop "to engage in a dialogue and process toward developing a set of advising competencies through reflection on practice." Prior to the meeting each participant was asked to do two things: 1) think about two significant advising encounters and jot down some details that they recalled; and, 2) start a list of behaviors, skills, and attitudes that (s)he considered to be competencies of good advising. The first of these assignments was intended to get participants in the frame of mind to work with narrative during the workshop; the second was preparation for a step that would come near the end of the process.

A narrative strategy was used for several reasons. The exchange of stories about work with students is a commonplace activity in the organization. The faculty and staff informally use

each other's stories as reference points for their own work. Thus, storytelling was a way to take an everyday practice into a slightly more formal setting and draw on aspects of critical incident techniques (Flanagan, 1954) to focus stories and behavioral event interview strategies (McClelland, 1978) that slow down the narrative process to enrich the data and extract the embedded competencies.

Below is an overview of the process that 35 members of the college, distributed between two workshops, engaged in to develop a set of competencies drawn from their experiences; details regarding each of the steps follow.

INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES (full group)

STORYTELLING — description of advising encounters (sub-groups)

IDENTIFICATION OF COMPETENCIES - 1st Cut (sub-groups)

REFINEMENT OF COMPETENCIES (sub-groups)

REPORT OUT AND CONSOLIDATION (full group)

WHAT'S MISSING? (full group)

NEXT STEPS AND WRAP-UP (full group)

Introduction and Objectives: The whole group (17-18 people/group) was welcomed and provided a brief statement reflecting the following desired outcomes: a) to develop a draft set of statements that describe the competencies to provide excellent advising to learners in the school; and, b) to provide an opportunity for self-assessment of one's knowledge and practice, framed in a practice-based orientation. A description of the sequence and purposes of ensuing events was intentionally avoided at the beginning of the workshop so that participants would not circumvent any of the steps, particularly the storytelling phase.

Storytelling — describing advising encounters: The large group was divided into smaller groups of 3-5 and asked to focus their attention on a specific advising context. Each group was given a context from among a variety described earlier in the Context section — e.g., prospective student, program planning, admissions, independent learning, major project development, etc. The small groups were asked to have 1-2 people over the ensuing thirty minutes relate a specific encounter within the assigned context while the other members of the group probed for specific-

ity of behaviors, thoughts, and dialogue through questions phrased as non-directively as possible. The stories need not have been ones of "successful" or positive encounters but rather informative interactions that conveyed a range of behaviors and skills. One member of the group was also asked to record the narrative in detail.

Identifying competencies in the narratives: The full group was reconvened briefly and asked, upon returning to their small groups, to analyze their notes for the skills, knowledge, and attitudes reflected in the stories. The groups were requested to use the general syntax of a competency statement in which the third person is understood and the format is "Can....." Special emphasis was placed on choosing verbs that reflected abilities expressed in the narratives.

Refining the competencies: Once a draft set had been generated, each group was asked to review each statement for clarity; in addition, if underlying or contributing areas of knowledge could be identified, the statement was to be extended into the form: "Can.....based on an understanding of....."

Reporting out: The full group was then gathered for reporting out the sets of statements. A useful strategy for this step was having the first group, arbitrarily designated, report out its full set, the second group adding only those statements that did not duplicate any from the first, the third group adding only their statements that were unique to the growing set, etc.

What's Missing?: Once all the groups had reported out, thus creating the first full draft of a collective set of competency statements, each member of the group was asked to examine the statements and to ask her/himself, "What's missing?" from the list. It was at this point that the competencies that each person drafted in preparation for the workshop were drawn on to supplement, with individual reflections, what had emerged from the groups' effort.

Outcomes of the Process

A total of 108 draft competency statements were generated by the 35 staff and faculty over the course of two workshops. These were then analyzed by the author and several colleagues who participated in the workshops with respect to themes, redundancy, and consistency. The base list of 108 statements were distilled to 30 and organized into 5 categories. Items from the base list that expressed values and attitudes regarding a dimension of advising were drawn on to provide explanatory text for the competence statements. Twice during the process of consolidation and thematic analysis the interim drafts were circulated among those who participated for their interpretation, commentary, and suggestions.

A set of competencies describing advising ultimately emerged from this reiterative narrative process. These competencies were preceded by a preamble setting the philosophy and context for advising adult learners — the key points of the preamble emphasized that advising is a valuable means to help "unlock learners" potential for maximum growth, development," and academic progress. It reflected that advising is a primary means to actualize the individualization of learners' curriculum and educational experience. It also set forth that advising is a holistic and interactive transaction that honors learners' individuality and that advisors are "at their best when proactively seeking and responding to the opportunity to engage students in the joys and struggles of learning."

The thirty competencies themselves were organized into five areas: Planning and Organizing; Assessment; Communicating and Counseling; Teaching and Learning/Facilitating Learning; Professional Ethics, Values, and Development. The full set of competencies will be reviewed as part of the conference workshop.

Discussion

The strategy of drawing on a commonplace means of communication — storytelling—and exploiting it by providing some structure, prescribed focus, and intentionality to the interaction between narrator and audience proved to be an effective means of fostering reflection and analysis. Storytelling is also a powerful means of capturing the complexities, spontaneity, and interpretive nature of advising. It allowed communication of seemingly paradoxical or contradictory experiences. The narrative process illuminated possibilities and permitted capture of those aspects of advising that are nonlinear, subjective, and uncertain (Witherell and Noddings, 1991). Storytelling as a narrative way of knowing integrated abstract theories and concepts to the particular case (Montgomery-Hunter, 1991) and thus allowed the participants to join together thoughts, feelings, values, and attitudes. This provided a rich data source from which to extract embedded competencies. As a collective statement of ethics and values, articulated advising competencies can build on growing efforts to outline ethical dimensions of academic advising and identify its core values as exemplified by the National Academic Advising Association's (NACADA) "Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising" and, as Lowenstein and Grites (1993) point out, by NACADA's adoption of "the 1988 Standards and Guidelines developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs." Lowenstein and Grites (1993) more recently have outlined a set of ethical principles advisors can use to guide practice.

It was our experience that there are many ways to organize

competencies and to phrase them; on the whole, however, they reflected overarching beliefs that a fundamental purpose of academic advising is to help students "become effective agents for their own lifelong learning and personal development" (Chickering, 1994) and that advisors serve as mentors, in almost every context, in the process of that development (Dalosz, 1988). While these dimensions were already an understanding of most of those who participated in the articulation of the competencies, it is the recognition of this ethos in the practices themselves that underscored their importance to the entire academic unit as well.

Each workshop took approximately 3.5 hours; follow-up work to refine, consolidate, organize, and circulate the base list for feedback toward its current configuration took another 15-20 hours. In both workshops, the participants continued the conversation beyond the structured time, particularly to explore assumptions regarding adult learners, dimensions of advising, and roles and responsibilities. Thus, the process of eliciting a set of competencies proved to be a stimulus to discussion about advising and professional development in a broader way than the focused task. The inquiry process became embedded in a collective act of reflection and development. Participants expressed both enjoyment in the process and appreciation for the outcomes; it is anticipated their engagement in the effort to produce a statement of good practices will result in a greater sense of ownership as the competencies are drawn on for professional development and performance assessment. Early experience is supporting this belief.

Use of this narrative methodology in other settings would undoubtedly surface other values and beliefs that inform and underlie practices in units with different missions, histories, and populations. From an organizational viewpoint, a set of competencies may also be seen as a collective statement of ethics, offering expectations for engaging in advising that reflect assumptions and values across the organization.

The competencies may be used in several ways: 1) to assist those who engage in advising to expand their awareness of the activities in which they engage; 2) to provide a basis for assuming responsibility for and assessing one's own performance; 3) to provide a framework for designing and engaging in continuous professional development; 4) to review performance or credentials for new hires; and, 5) to serve as a catalyst and platform for research efforts around specific advising issues or skills. We foresee the use of the competencies will proceed incrementally as they are adopted initially for self-assessment and a basis for professional development activities. Assessment and the recognition of indicators of quality for each and any given competence

pose their own challenges as a set of competencies becomes a basis for periodic performance review of staff and faculty, including in the context of promotion and tenure. The competencies are both a testimony to the complexity of advising and the responsibilities of an advisor; indeed, taken as a whole, they can be overwhelming in their breadth or invigorating in their actualization. Recognizing that a set of competencies is drawn from actual practice and articulated by a collective process helps to keep a focus on the latter.

While certainly not a new approach to describing elements of good practice (e.g., Schneider et al, 1981), the use of articulated competencies has been gaining currency. For example, the American College of Preventive Medicine recently adopted a set of competencies for medical residents (Lane et al, 1995) developed through a process that engaged various practitioners and medical educators in a consensus building process (Lane and Ross, 1994). The American Board of Genetic Counselors has integrated a set of competencies into its program accreditation documentation; those competencies were developed through the process described here (Fiddler and Fine, 1995) with a group of graduate training program directors for whom storytelling amongst themselves was not a routine source of exchange, suggesting the strength of the method is not reliant on that dimension of familiarity within an organization's culture.

Stories attach us to others and provide connections to our own personal histories. Through narrative, we can reorganize, reassess, and realign our experiences and current practices.

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Teaching in the Learner-Centered Environment: A Job Description

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The latest fashion in discussions of education is to speak of "learner-centered" or "learner-based" education. This idea certainly isn't new, but its popularity is. At the same time, the arrival on the distance education scene of the computer and other new communications media has encouraged those whose priorities are more fiscal than educational to emphasize economies in the "delivery" system, to be accomplished by packaging and purveying instruction like other commodities. This content- and format- centered approach diminishes the role of the teacher, without being more responsive to the learner, in effect eliminating the likelihood that such instruction can be called, in fact, learner-centered.

The simple-minded belief that technological innovations can be substituted for pre- existing elements of the educational milieu, with the related assumption that the pre- existing milieu is, in fact, appropriately configured in the first place, ignores some of the primary philosophical and applied concerns of learner-centered education. Most significantly it fails to acknowledge that the role of the teacher is first and foremost to manipulate the learning environment in concert with the needs of the learner, taking into account the experiences a learner brings to the educational milieu, and through which the learner interprets the learning experience. The substitution of computer-aided instruction for teacher-facilitated learning implies that the teacher is an imparter of knowledge (instructor) rather than a facilitator of learning (mentor). This distinction between "instruction" and "learning" (Knowles, 1980, 18-20) is important because it capsulizes the paradox present in recent educational thought and in the renewed debate about the constitution of effective education.

In this paper, the recent re-emergence of "traditional" or pedagogical education in a technological guise will be discussed, along with its implications for the role of the teacher. Some aspects of teaching in a learner-centered or androgogical environment will be explored, with particular reference to what is known about the learning needs of adults. Since learner-centered education is more than merely independent study or individualized instruction, the teacher's job is more complex than it is in the "tradi-

tional" system. Illustrations substantiating this argument will be drawn from faculty and student experiences in a highly facilitative distance program (Goss, et al., in press). The demands and possibilities inherent in the newer communications technologies reinforce our conviction that we must be open to all opportunities to offer learner centered education in more effective and potentially more creative ways.

Distance Education and the Industrial Model: Fiscal Efficacy

Progressive educators have long held that the "vessel-to-be-filled" and the "lamp- to-be lighted" instructional attitudes toward students are based on a misunderstanding of the learning process (Pitkin, cited in Benson & Stokes, 1987, 46). Nonetheless, much recent interest in distance learning, (which usually means electronically mediated "delivery" of instruction), has taken the form of efforts to create more cost-efficient methods for delivering this same traditional "education" (fiscal efficacy). Allan Hayduk, for example, cites Peters approvingly in describing distance education as "a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which is rationalized by the application of division of labour and organization principles as well as by the extensive use of technical media, especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students, wherever they live" (1994, 46). He further describes distance education as emanating from "a formal education organization rather than from an individual instructor" (1994, 45). His most significant stipulation is that the "content of distance instruction is carried by the materials, not by the tutor or writer", which allows for the separation of "course delivery" from "course development" (1994, 46). Clearly such distance education retains a focus on instruction as distinct from learning.

Hayduk himself, along with other commentators whose priorities tend to be fiscal rather than strictly educational, recognizes that under this description "distance education is the most industrialized form of education," and sees many "potential benefits" in this structure (1994, 46-47). "Quality control standards may be more easily and consistently applied" and, following Perry, "industrial style management may work best. . . Industrial production systems models appear to work well both for learner monitoring and management and registrarial control. They can also work well in monitoring the amount and the success of personal contact between tutors and students" (1994, 47).

Obviously this is not learner-centered education. Some critics have labelled it "Fordist" for its reliance on an assembly-line concept of process and, presumably, of product. There is little scope for individualization in a system relying on uniformity and quantifiable outcomes, and the emphasis is on "delivery" of in-

formation to recipients. This instructional approach is very much in line with the "traditional" view of education.

> Where knowledge is considered to be external to individuals and is viewed as a coherent body of ideas, some proven and hence factual, the major intent of teaching is to transfer this knowledge from the teacher to the student. From such a perspective it is crucial that the major building blocks, the concepts and theories, are explained clearly and in proper sequence so that the student can reproduce this structure internally. The intention is to have the student explore ideas and connections within that framework of ideas. (Burge & Haughey, 1993, 88)

Within such a framework, it is clearly feasible to replace the actual presence of a teacher with electronically communicated modules, formulated by a course designer according to prescribed parameters. The question that must be asked is whether the outcomes of such a system are useful to the individual student or to society at-large. Can, for example, the "critical thinking" and "problem-solving" skills, so frequently mentioned as needed in the workforce of the future, be acquired within the "industrial model"? Is "transformative" education, as described by Brookfield, Mezirow and others, possible if educational uses of technology merely ape other systems of "production"?

The increasing influence of electronic communications in our lives, as well as the large increases in educational opportunities available through it, suggests that we reconsider the of efficacy standardized or "batch" methods of teaching exemplified in the traditional lecture and now replicated in "computer aided instruction". Does the transformation of personal interactions as mediated by electronic communications necessitate a transformation in the structure of educational interactions? Do we need to rethink the work of the teacher?

Teachers' Work and Students' Learning: Instructional Efficiency

Thoughtful observers of education have frequently called for a "restructuring of the role of faculty". In the '60's and '70's "progressive" educator themselves frequently advocated the complete subordination of teaching (as a manifestation of authority) within a "student-organized" or "student-directed" system. A careful examination of learner- centered education, however, shows that it involves a much more central and creative role for the teacher than does either a traditional or a media-driven "content-centered" approach. This role is complex and requires a variety of skills and knowledge. Cultivating critical thinking in the learner, for example: Stephen Brookfield quotes Meyer in saying "Teaching critical thinking is. . . inherently disruptive and

involves intentionally creating an atmosphere of disequilibrium, so that students can change, rework, or reconstruct their thinking processes" (1987, 90).

The current tendency of commentators to mix fiscal rationales with educational insight which was noted above, sometimes makes it hard to discern the underlying commitments. Alan Guskin, for example, finds that faculty "productivity" must be increased for economic reasons, but hastens to disclaim the implication that "volume of activity is the appropriate goal; the issue is not how many courses faculty teach, but how much students learn" (1994, 18). Writing in Change magazine, he outlines ways in which faculty must change their work, ways which will "maximize essential faculty-student interaction, integrate new technologies fully into the learning process, and enhance student learning through peer interaction" (Guskin, 1994, 19). He follows Donald Norman and others in describing an essentially facilitative learning role for teachers, using terms such as "motivate", "encourage", "communicate", "guide", "respect". Guskin recognizes, of course, that any restructuring of what faculty do must be grounded in a basic change of viewpoint, saying that students can no longer "be expected to be passive recipients of information and knowledge" (1994, 25). However, he also puts forward what seems to be a contradictory claim—that three principal types of learning, "accumulation of information and knowledge, skill development, and conceptual development . . . occur more or less effectively in most institutional learning environments" (1994, 19). Why is change necessary if learning takes place no matter what the context?

Many of Guskin's recommendations apply to education at any level. Best practice in elementary classrooms has already integrated most of the strategies and perspectives he enumerates; theorists of adult education elaborate the same ideas about the needs of mature learners. The problem is that just as we begin to understand the complexity and importance of teaching, there is a strong trend toward seeing the teacher as at least partially expendable. Even Guskin's discussion is driven by what he views as the inevitability of downsizing, because of increasing costs. His proposed change to an "enhancing and facilitating" role for faculty would come only as a way of accomplishing that. But one implication of our argument here about change in teaching practice will be that downsizing may be neither practical nor desirable, i.e., that educational efficacy may not be correlated with fiscal "efficiencies", or that short term savings may bring longer term losses.

The Distinctiveness of "Learning": Educational Efficacy

We set ourselves the task of finding some ground between

several sets of ideas: 1) students must gain knowledge through the teacher's instructional activities; 2) there is a need to improve teachers' productivity (perhaps through the efficacy of computer-based instruction); and 3) in a learner-centered environment, teachers' work is much more demanding and creative, yet not necessarily subject to more conventional measures of productivity. Let us begin with a definition of "learner-centered education". **Learner-centered education is experience deliberately directed to the educational needs and goals of individual students, as articulated and implemented by those students in conjunction with faculty and other mentors**. What justification is there for including faculty and mentors in this definition? In the 60's, and even before, progressive educators encouraged students to question all authority, academic or otherwise, and frequently relegated themselves to a "non-directive" role. If we assume that learning is an active process, ideally the learner is formulating for investigation questions which arise from her/his own experience. If human beings are curious, questioning is natural, and unresolved doubts create a sense of disease which requires to be addressed, what function does a teacher serve? Is it possible after all that progressive and "neo-traditional" (Payne's term for the advocacy of pre- packaged "education") education are in fundamental agreement about the marginality of the teacher in the learning process? We draw on the writing of students about their experience in one distance education program, which suggests that the teacher is far from a fringe player in a learner's experience:

> With [my field faculty advisor] providing some rather specific structure at the beginning, I developed a curriculum around what he and I believed were key reading areas . . . Around these reading areas I developed my study plan, a study I knew would be demanding. (Counseling psychology graduate student)

> The program advocates the student pursuing what the student wants to learn. With constructive guidance from my core and field faculty, I was encouraged to decide how best to reach that goal. My thinking, planning and ideas were not only considered to be valid, they were also the nuts and bolts of my study plan. (Teacher education graduate student)

> The main difference between traditional programs and [The Graduate Program] is the structure of the contact; low-residency programs do not have fewer contact hours, but the contact hours are structured very differently...

> My capacity for introspection, reflection and critical thinking dramatically improved during my two years of graduate studies. (Psychology/education graduate student)

Progressive educational thought has always been heavily Deweyan. As interpreted by Royce Pitkin, founding president of Goddard College, active effort by a teacher is essential. He was quoted by Benson and Stokes as saying that although "learning almost always results when a person is attempting to solve a problem or is coping with some uncertainty or imbalance . . . You have to create a situation in which the individual sees some reason or some need for doing what you want done" [emphasis added] (1987, 45). Another ingredient was also cited by Pitkin: "The outcome of the educational process as it is experienced in school and college depends to a great extent on the kind of interactions that take place between student and teacher, an interaction that may be extremely complex and which is affected by subtle and powerful forces lying within each person. Recognition of the existence of these forces, some of which operate below the level of consciousness, places on the educator an increased responsibility for making full use of his conscious and rational thoughts in working with the student." (1987, 46). And the "duration of the interaction is far less important than its nature and quality. The one essential is interaction, an exchange of ideas and feelings" (1987, 202). The few examples cited above clearly support these tenets of progressive education.

These tenets certainly recognize the "social construction of knowledge" and point not only to the deficiencies of the traditional model, but now to the dangers of leaving the student alone in front of a computer to receive and react to "modules" of information, without even the notional "teacher" watching the glaze spread over several hundred pairs of eyes. Such a misuse, however, is not a feature of the technology itself, which contains the latent capacity to stimulate original thought and to encourage cooperative and collaborative work between students and between student and teacher. For this to happen will require a radical reorientation of faculty and a "re-placement" of their authority, which must shift from the power of making people repeat what they have said (i.e., instruction) to the power of fostering growth (i.e., learning). When this has been prescribed before, it has been wrongly interpreted as an abandonment of scholarship and academic standards for relativism and fuzzy-mindedness. Seymour Papert (1993, 56) describes clearly the highly individual way in which real intellectual motivation grows, and looks to the computer (the "children's machine") as a force for liberating us from the dead hand of "school". He also provides hope that neo-tradi-

tionalism is only the first effort of the established system to fight off change.

Incorporating Appropriate Technology to Create an Efficacious Learning Environment

Learning can be enhanced in many ways through the incorporation of electronic communications technology. Distance-education, which by its nature is an isolated experience with learners sometimes at great distances from teachers and other learners, is a particularly attractive candidate for the appropriate application of this technology. This is not to say that the most efficacious application for learning is the design and delivery of prepackaged instructional modules (although for some forms of technically-specific kinds of learning this is appropriate); learner-centered education (that is, learning which acknowledges and takes advantage of learners' experiences and a prior knowledge) can be facilitated by telecommunications and related technologies. But they must be seen as means to enhance learners' opportunities to interact with teachers and other learners, and not substitutes for teachers in the guise of computer chips and monitors. Rather, these technologies must be used to make the sharing and construction of knowledge more possible. Embedded in the naming of this technology is the operative term: communications. It is through the interaction of learners, and of learners with teachers, that real learning (as distinct from instruction) takes place.

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Mentoring Adults: Universal Education for the Twenty-First Century?

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This year SUNY Empire State College is celebrating its 25th year. Its origins are to some degree cloaked in mystery: some say that it was developed explicitly to serve the needs of adult students; others say that its innovative methods were designed in response to the upheavals of the 60's. Regardless of the source, the vast majority of our students are adults. Over time, our methods have become so closely tied to the type of student we have that most faculty believe our methods were selected because they are suited to the adult student.

Today, we'd like to explore the possibility that the connection between adult learning and our innovative methods ought to be separated; otherwise, we may be doing an injustice not only to our students, but to higher education. The injustice to adult students is that by being associated primarily with nontraditional education, they are seen as somehow different from "real" students. Seventeen to twenty-one year olds and the ways by which they learn become the benchmark against which adults are then measured. But that's an issue we will leave for another day. It is the injustice to higher education that we would like to pursue further with you here.

Much has been written about the "failures" of higher education today. Faculty speak about the poor academic skills of students, their lack of motivation, their excessive interest in vocationalism; business and community leaders complain about the seeming inability of college graduates to deal with complex work demands, their lack of civic involvement, and the relative superficiality of their knowledge. Two solutions often proposed include imposing higher standards and forcing faculty to do more teaching. Interestingly, the assumption underlying the call for improved student selection and greater faculty involvement, is that the basic structure of higher education is fine.

We would like to suggest that traditional higher education is not fine and that these fixes will not necessarily produce graduates who have the self-direction, flexibility, and critical thinking skills that seem to be needed in the postmodern world. The best of today's institutions of higher education are still based upon a model of learning that goes back at least 1000 years, and there is good reason to suppose that it may inappropriate to the challenges and complexities of the 21st century. Although much has been written about the so-called postmodern world, we as social

scientists have not been touched much by that literature until we recently read In Over Our Heads by psychologist Robert Kegan. In it he argues that today's world requires higher and more abstract levels of cognitive and emotional development than ever before, and he presents a model of human development that contains stages of thinking that go beyond the usual requirements of adulthood. Regardless of the accuracy of the post-adult stages he posits, the theory is important because it offers evidence that traditional knowledge falls short of what is needed to deal with the highly complex, diverse, and global world we now face.

What is needed, we believe, is a highly flexible and responsive education, much like what is offered at Empire State College. The method we use can best be described in terms of its key feature — the relationship between student and faculty that we call "mentoring." Instead of in classrooms, faculty meet students individually, help them develop studies that meet their needs without regard to academic discipline or existing curriculum, and allow them to pursue these studies largely on their own and in ways that best suit the subject matter and the skills and preferences of the student. To explain why we call this set of characteristics "mentoring," we will excerpt a little of our recent presentation at the International Mentoring Association.

The first criterion for any mentoring relationship is that it consist of just two people: a mentor and a protege. Classroom teachers, workshop leaders, lecturers are, as such, not considered mentors unless they also work individually with someone. Moreover, this one-to-one relationship is by definition an unequal one. To be a mentor, the person must possess a special skill, talent, position, or condition — some attribute that the protege can benefit from. That attribute can be knowledge, information, maturity, morality, status, access to resources — anything that is generally respected and/or needed by society. On the other side, the protege not only lacks this attribute, but understands its importance and values it.

The second set of criteria that defines the mentoring relationship are those features that set limits on the relationship or that determine its boundaries. First, while there will be multiple contacts between mentor and protege over an extended period of time, the actual time spent together is relatively short, at best five or six hours a week or more typically, two or three hours a month. The limits on contact time is due to a second limiting factor: the mentoring relationship is always an add-on to the ordinary lives of both the mentor and protege. Both have other relationships, activities, and commitments that are important to them and may or may not be invisible to each other when they meet. The last limiting factor is that with mentoring, unlike rela-

tionships among peers, the mentor and protege are not equal in power. Those very attributes that distinguish the mentor are also what typically render him or her more powerful than the protege....

The last set of criteria that are critical in distinguishing mentoring from other relationships has to do with the expectations of the two participants. First, a mentor has a strong desire to help or to serve. Secondly, a protege has a strong desire to be helped, or at least to change or move forward in his or her life. Thirdly, both participants expect that the mentoring relationship will make a positive difference to the protege. And lastly, there is a strong emotional component to this relationship: both participants are personally "invested" in it in ways that are rare and perhaps even counterproductive in corporate training situations, academic advisement settings, or the offices of professional counselors....

Because Empire State College faculty are teachers who meet students individually, it is easy to see how we meet the first two definitional criteria. Like the original mentor, we are charged with providing our students with the knowledge they need to succeed in an increasingly technological world where higher education is more and more important. Like our colleagues in the corporate world, we help our proteges maneuver the many pitfalls and barriers of the world we know well, academia. We work under the same time limits as the mentors described in the mentoring literature, and we are particularly sensitive to the problem of not attending to the power differences between us and our proteges. In the "outside world," so to speak, our proteges are our equals: they are adults, rich and poor, successful and not so successful, famous or not so well known. But in our world, the world of higher education to which they wish to gain entry, and for the big reward that they seek at the end, a degree, we hold the key; and for the duration of our relationship, that fact sets an important boundary.

It may be less obvious how mentoring at Empire State College can be seen as an add-on for mentors when it is in fact our job to work with students in this manner; on the other hand, it is very clear that it is an add-on for the students. It may also not be so obvious how as professional mentors, we still meet the motivational criteria. Helping students "make it," attending to their own needs and purposes, working with them individually to make sure they can succeed, providing them with "extra" curricular assistance are, by definition, extra assignments in the ordinary world of academia. And in being concerned about our student's progress, we find ourselves deeply caught up in their lives. We value our good service to students; we hope our work will make a

difference to them; and we make the same sacrifices in our personal and professional lives, suffer from the same frustrations and failures, and invest ourselves emotionally in the service of our proteges as do mentors in other settings.

How can a "mentored" education as described above better prepare students for the demands of the post-modern world than a traditional education? We see a number of ways. First, by working individually with students, we can embed their studies into their personal life, their work, and/or their community involvement. Thus, we deal from the start with the real world and its complexities. We also concentrate upon a subject matter or problem that is of direct interest to the student. Any problem is considered suitable, and the mentor's task is to steer the student toward "academic" (and other) resources in their attempt toward solution. Traditional disciplinary knowledge may at first be seen only as a tool by which to analyze and better understand everyday concerns. Later, such knowledge may become a means for understanding more abstract or general issues, or interesting in its own right.

Individualized work with the student also allows the mentor to assess the unique combination of strengths and weaknesses of each student and to create study plans that take those attributes into account. Kegan argues that in order to move from one cognitive stage to another, it is important that one be secure in a given position before it can be outgrown. He likens development to a bridge: one leg represents the current stage, the other leg the next stage of development, and the span the developmental journey. Before starting to cross the bridge a person needs to feel that it is securely grounded; in educational terms that means that studies need start from where the student is currently positioned — an idea that is not exactly new and which is easy to do in an individualized study, but almost impossible to execute in a large classroom.

Finally, the process of independent study provides its own learning opportunities. For example, students can only see their mentors about once every week or so, at best. Thus, they must learn strategies of self-directed study — how to organize their time, acquire ways of dealing with distractions, locate and evaluate resources, and so forth. They also learn how to identify problems amenable to analysis and to recognize those that are not. As such, these learning challenges explicitly promote independence of thought and action, flexibility, and critical thinking. Contrast these outcomes with those of classroom (or mass) instruction, which under ordinary circumstances promotes passivity and dependence, the learning of strategies for figuring out what the teacher expects (usually on tests), and the association

of learning with highly structured and well-defined problems and situations.

Given these strengths, why is mentoring regarded as only applicable to the adult student? Why has our college, for example, tended to treat the two are inseparable? We have identified several possible explanations, which we will offer here, but we hope that you too can provide some additional suggestions. First, there is the question of cost. One-on-one instruction is not seen as economically feasible with the number of traditional aged students that enter school each fall. Until recently adult students were seen as only a very small segment of the population that could be handled in special ways. Secondly, it is often said that adults require that their education be obviously meaningful. The apparent corollary is either than younger students don't care whether their education makes sense, or more likely that younger students are more malleable and can be more easily made to study what is good for them regardless of whether they see why. Third, it is said that adults don't like the structure of the classroom — that they like working on their own — whereas the younger students do not. Also adults, unlike traditional-aged students, don't need the social contacts provided by a classroom since they already are embedded in their own world of family, friends, work and community. Fourth, independent study requires levels of motivation and self discipline that younger students do not have. Finally,, adult students have a depth of experience from which to create studies around their own interests whereas younger students' past experiences are too shallow and/or their ability to draw upon them is too undeveloped to be useable in an educational setting.

Our response to these purported differences is two-fold — either they are untrue or they are alterable through education. It is not true that mentoring costs more than conventional methods of instruction. While the economics of mentoring are complex, our college nonetheless operates within the same financial constraints as our sister institutions in SUNY and meet the same FTE targets — and indeed, we are considered more cost-effective than most. It is also not true that younger students don't demand relevance in their studies — indeed, the purported "vocationalism" of traditional-aged students is a direct expression of that demand. Similarly it's not true that adults don't like structure, nor is it true that a mentoring situation necessarily lacks structure. Both adult and younger students need to have short- and long-term goals, clearly defined learning activities, and an overall schedule for completing their work. When working on their own, however, they will need to learn how to create such a structure. They also may need to learn to create appro-

priate social support systems when appropriate, since there is no reason that mentoring must preclude contact with other students. Nor is it true that adults are necessarily more educationally motivated than younger students or that they automatically possess the required self-discipline to work on their own whereas younger students by definition do not. There are huge variations within both age groups.

Where there are genuine differences, they are often just the result of differences in the impact of prior school experiences. Younger college students tend to approach their studies the way they did in high school, where they were simply told what to do. Also, many of the study skills they acquired in high school, while continuing to be important in traditional colleges, are maladaptive for independent study. For example, they have learned to sit in class, listen to the teacher and figure out what that teacher wants them to learn, read the text the night before the exam, and then skillfully negotiate the exam so as to pass. These students do not know how to read and reflect on their own, nor do they know how to discuss what they have read or thought about with their teacher. Many of our adults students having dropped out of traditional settings some time ago are already sensitive to these problems and are prepared to try something new; the younger students have not yet learned to challenge that way of learning. These are not immutable differences, however. We simply need to be prepared at the outset to recognize that conditions of independent learning and the necessary skills for achieving them may need to be explicitly taught to younger students, just as we occasionally must teach them to those adults who harken back to what they were taught as youngsters.

There is one difference that by definition distinguishes younger from older students — that is, the depth and breadth of their prior life experiences. It is not clear how this difference affects the way in which students most effectively learn. We often assume that this particular difference is the reason why adults seem to value their educational opportunities more than 17-year olds are purported to do. That is, adults have had enough varied and contradictory experiences to motivate them to want to understand them better and they have more to draw from in their own lives as material for study. Given that young children without hardly any experience are nonetheless motivated to learn, it's hard to believe that 17 or 18 years of experience is not sufficient to stimulate questions or relevant exemplars. What may be more important in determining why adults seem to value their education more than traditional-aged students is that they are a self-selected set of students, that is, they have chosen to return to school whereas many traditional aged students go to schoc!

simply because it is expected of them. Experience may still be important in affecting student motivation, but not directly. The curricula, purposes, and underlying agenda of higher education have been determined by scholars who happen also to be adults themselves having experienced the same complexities and contradictions as our adult students. Thus, the questions asked and problems posed in institutions of higher learning make good sense to adult students who can easily relate to the same issues, whereas they may be well "over the heads" of a younger constituency. This would suggest that experience is important not in the method of teaching but rather in the content of what is learned. If so, then mentoring is far better suited to the younger student than the traditional classroom, because each study can be tailored precisely to the interests of the student. The only critical factor is that the mentor be able to relate to the questions and problems that are important to adolescents. This may not be a trivial requirement, but it shows clearly that when mentoring fails with younger students, the fault could just as well be in the mentor as in the student.

Of course, these are all speculations. As we mentioned earlier, we would like to ask you to help us in our efforts to analyze the differences between adult and younger students so as to support or reject our working hypothesis that the educational advantages of mentoring can and should be extended to all students. Thus, we now invite your input.

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